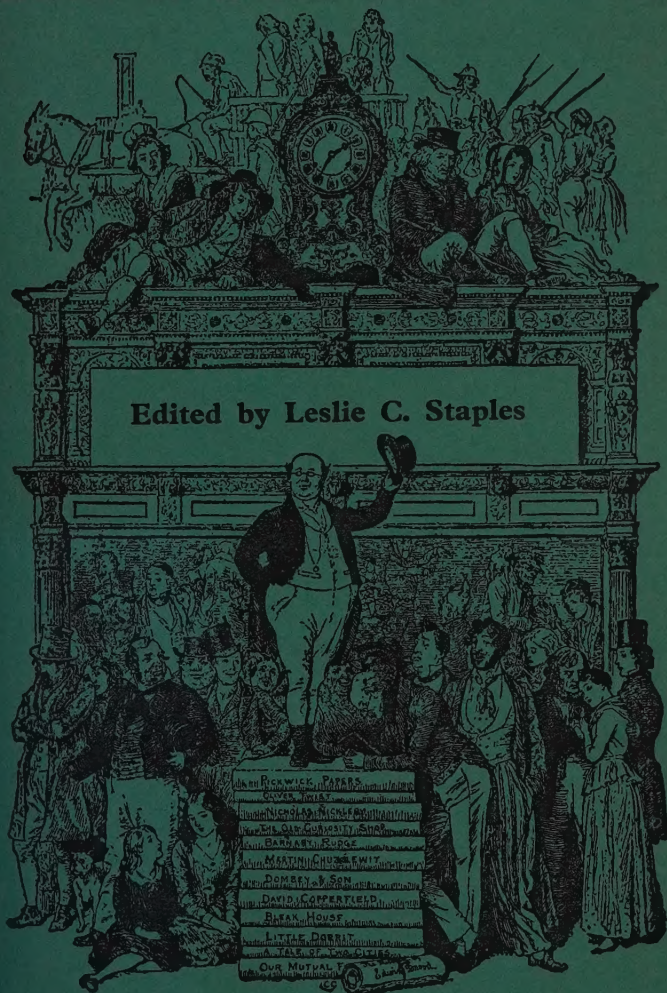


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# THE DICKENSIAN



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Fanny Jarman, actress  
mother of Ellen Ternan

see page 37

# THE DICKENSIAN

WINTER NUMBER

VOL. LIV.

JANUARY 1958

No. 324

## WHEN FOUND—

**Devonshire Terrace** Since reporting, in the last number, the Minister of Housing's announcement in the House of Commons that the Government did not propose to interfere with the demolition of Dickens's old home at No. 1 Devonshire Terrace, the Hon. Secretary of the Fellowship received, in September, intimation that the London County Council were following suit. Thus ends a shameful chapter in the sorry history of the administration of the law governing the preservation of historic buildings. A similar fate waits the St. James's Theatre on which we also commented in the September Number.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Jo's Forge** Although the cottage at the Kentish village of Chalk in which Dickens spent his honeymoon is a further casualty, the near-by forge, which was undoubtedly in Dickens's mind when describing that of Jo Gargery, is now marked by a tablet, erected by the Dickens Fellowship, with the kindly co-operation of Mr. Horace Prentice, the owner.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Bruce Castle** This ancient Tottenham manor-house, occupied for many years by the boys' school whose educational principles so impressed Dickens (cf. our Autumn Number, 1955) has been temporarily reprieved from the demolition tentatively suggested to the Ministry of Works by its owners, the Tottenham Council. The Ministry has decided that this "scheduled" building can be repaired, and the Council has discovered that a sum of £30,000 is needed for the purpose—a fact of which, needless to say, it has duly apprized the Ministry.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Mr. John Greaves** Following his three television appearances in June in the 64,000 Challenge programme, our Hon. Secretary was challenged in turn by Mrs. P. V. Treliving of Kensington, and made three more appearances in August. Unfortunately the Challenge programme came to an end to make way for a revival of the 64,000 Question, and the two contestants shared the 16,000 question, which they both answered successfully, Mr. Greaves remaining the T.V. Champion. We have since been delighted to welcome Mrs. Treliving as a new member. Besides speaking in the Town and Country programme on answering letters addressed to Sherlock Holmes at 221b Baker Street, our Hon. Secretary also took part, just before Christmas, in "Eyewitness", another B.B.C. programme, recalling Dickens's descriptions of Christmas Dinners.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Earl Jowitt** The Fellowship loses a good friend by the lamented death, in August last, of Earl Jowitt. He was President from 1953 until 1955.

LESLIE C. STAPLES

## THE MONTHLY SERIALISATION OF DICKENS'S NOVELS

By K. J. FIELDING

WE all know the story of how, one day in February 1836, William Hall called on the young author of *Sketches by Boz*, who was then living in Furnival's Inn. They had a brief interview, at which Hall proposed "a something that should be published in shilling numbers"; and, at that short meeting, not only was the idea born of the *Pickwick Papers*, but the form and character of most of Dickens's novels was largely decided. At the time of the meeting, publication in numbers, says Dickens, "was only known to me, or I believe to anybody else, by a dim recollection of certain interminable novels in that form, which used to be carried about the country by pedlars." It was Dickens who made it a familiar form of publication, and who set an example to his rivals. With the exception of *Master Humphrey's Clock*, which was published weekly and monthly simultaneously and in turn contained two novels, and the three stories that were first printed in *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*, all his novels were published as monthly serials.

Strangely enough, his contemporaries seem to have taken to this form of reading almost without comment. Few of his reviewers had anything to say about the peculiarities of serialisation, and although Carlyle objected to taking *A Tale of Two Cities* in "teaspoonfuls," practically everyone else seems to have been satisfied. The only reason the practice ceased was because, as soon as respectable magazines, which included a serial, were published for a shilling, there was no inducement for a reader to pay the same sum for the mere portion of a story.

In *Dickens and His Readers*, George H. Ford has mentioned a few of Dickens's contemporaries who commented on the practice. Henry Crabb Robinson disapproved of it, because he thought it encouraged a tendency to write in "sketches" instead of developing a plot. A critic of *David Copperfield*, in the *Prospective Review* complained that "the serial tale . . . is probably the lowest artistic form yet invented . . . which affords the greatest excuse for unlimited departures from . . . consistency, completeness and proportion"; and Thomas Shaw, author of *Outlines of English Literature* (1848), said much the same. Some other comments have been noted in Kathleen Tillotson's *Novels of The Eighteen Forties*, pp. 39-40. But it is not easy to find them. Walter Bagehot was contemptuous of Dickens's skill at constructing a plot, but he has nothing to say about the responsibility of serialisation for his weakness. George Henry Lewes was looked on as rather exceptional, among the writers of his time, for aspiring "to the dignity of art in fiction," yet in criticising Dickens he had nothing to say about his form of publication. Although monthly serialisation was new to the Victorians, they generally took it for granted.

Dickens, himself, seems to have found it stimulating: in fact, that was a reason, at one time, for his thinking of giving it up.

Just before his decision to visit America, he had a spell during which he seems to have been appalled at his own fecundity and success. He had written five novels in five years, and he decided it was time for him "to stop—to write no more, not one word, for a whole year"; and that he might then come out with a complete story, "and put the town in a blaze again." Although he never carried out this plan, it came back to him once more when he had finished *Chuzzlewit*: "Already, for some time," he told Forster, "I have had this hope and intention before me." Yet, on neither occasion, did he consider writing a complete story because he thought he could achieve something *better* by doing so, or even because it would be easier. It was simply because he was afraid of tiring his public, or of writing himself out.

All Dickens's comments on his methods of writing are interesting, especially those which are contained in his "Prefaces," which, of course, appeared only in the final numbers with instructions to the binder to place them where they belonged. In the preface to *Pickwick*, Dickens explained that his object in the work was simply "to place before the reader a constant succession of characters and incidents." He went on to say, however, that "if it be objected to the *Pickwick Papers*, that they are a mere series of adventures," he would content himself with the thought "that the same objection has been made to the works of some of the greatest novelists in the English language."

He also explained that his method of serialisation made it important to link the different numbers together by a strong "chain of interest," while the "general design should be so simple" that it would not suffer from "this detached and desultory form of publication." It had, therefore, at first seemed necessary to him to make every number "to a certain extent, complete in itself, and yet that the whole twenty numbers, when collected, should form one tolerably harmonious whole." This is, perhaps, a more accurate summing-up of his achievement than many that have appeared since.

In the preface to *Nicholas Nickleby*, Dickens was even more modest about his intentions; and he took farewell of his readers, in the words of Henry Mackenzie, as "the author" of a mere "periodical performance." He spoke of himself as no more than a correspondent of his readers. In this he probably underestimated his success in evolving the story. In finishing *Martin Chuzzlewit*, on the other hand, he called attention to the fact that during its progress, he had tried "to resist the temptation of the current Monthly Number, and to keep a steadier eye on the general purpose and design." His manuscript shows that he made a tentative beginning on his system of entering up a "part-plan" as he wrote each number; and Forster explains that the book had a design which was to exhibit by more or less every "person introduced, the number and variety of humours and vices that have their root in selfishness." *Chuzzlewit* certainly shows signs that Dickens attempted something of this kind; but the fruits of his attempt to construct a plot with a central idea were not to show until later novels, when it was no longer necessary to call the attention of the reader to what he meant to do.

An interesting account of Dickens's usual method of going to work was once given by one of his publishers, Frederic Chapman, in an interview printed in the *Daily Chronicle* (June 25th, 1892). It seems to have been overlooked until now; but although it tells us little that is new, it does show that what recent critics have deduced about Dickens's methods of work was well known at the time to his associates. After commenting on Dickens's way with manuscript and proofs, and how "up to the very moment of the appearance of the book," Dickens took an active part in correcting and altering it, Chapman explained that when he began: "after getting hold of a central idea, he revolved it in his mind until he had thought the matter thoroughly out. Then he made what I might call a programme of his story with the characters," and "upon this skeleton story he set to work and gave it literary sinew, blood and life." It is the fact that every one of his novels after *Martin Chuzzlewit* was written in this way, and that each of them had a carefully-thought-out central idea, which was kept in mind while the plot was developed, that makes all the difference between the earlier books and the later ones.

In fact, by the time he had finished his last complete work, *Our Mutual Friend*, for which he provided a "Postscript in Lieu of a Preface," he wrote, as George H. Ford says, in an "almost Jamesian fashion," about "the most interesting and difficult part" of his design. Dickens explained that: "Its difficulty was much enhanced by its mode of publication; for it would be very unreasonable to expect that many readers, pursuing a story in portions, from month to month through nineteen months, will, until they have it before them complete, perceive the relations of its finer threads to the whole pattern which is always before the eyes of the story weaver at his loom. Yet, that I hold the advantages of the mode of publication to outweigh its disadvantages, may be easily believed of one who revived it in the *Pickwick Papers* after long disuse, and has pursued it ever since."

Dickens's remarks suggest that he was not unaware of the general trend of critical opinion which was already beginning to show in the 'sixties. By this time writers were beginning to speak of "the art of fiction," and to demand form and structure from a novel. The curiously simple belief that Dickens owed his increased skill in evolving a plot to Wilkie Collins, leaves out of consideration that every novelist of the time was learning to exercise greater care in planning his work.

Much can be learnt about this from both *Dickens and His Readers*, and the introduction to Kathleen Tillotson's *Novels of the Eighteen-Forties*. Or, again, from any chronological arrangement of critical opinions on the novel (as in Walter Allen's *Writers on Writing*) one can see that this strong concern about form only came to the fore, in this country, towards the end of the nineteenth century. Henry James's essay on "The Art of Fiction," which was published in 1884, usefully marks the beginning of a greater critical consciousness about novel-writing, and the surrender of "the comfortable, good-humoured feeling . . . that a novel is a novel, as a pudding is a pudding, and that our only business with it should be to swallow it."

It is not surprising, therefore, that with the publication of Gissing's book on Dickens, fourteen years later, one finds practically the first attempt, outside casual reviews, to criticise the plots of the novels, and to take the circumstances of their publication into account. Writing of *The Old Curiosity Shop*, Gissing ruefully noted how easy it had been, sixty years earlier, to write as one pleased, without planning ahead, when "our grave Art of Fiction, a bitter task-mistress, had nothing to do with the matter."

Then, immediately after Gissing, came Chesterton, who was more interested in the vigour of Dickens's characters than the form of his plots. To show his contempt for the latter, he amiably declared that *Pickwick* was "not a novel at all," and in fact that strictly speaking, "there is no such novel as 'Nicholas Nickleby.' There is no such novel as 'Our Mutual Friend.' They are simply lengths cut from a flowing and mixed substance called Dickens." This caused Dickens's reputation immense harm, for the general critical opinion accepted Chesterton's view, and followed the bent of its own prejudice, so that this became the orthodox belief for the next forty years. It is only quite recently that critics have begun to write about the composition of each novel, and its merits as a whole.

In the last few years another development has taken place. Professor Sylvere Monod's, *Dickens Romancier*, the *Novels of the Eighteen-Forties*, and *Dickens at Work*, by John Butt and Kathleen Tillotson, have begun the study of Dickens's actual methods when he was writing a novel. Using all the documentary and textual evidence available, including the manuscripts, proof-sheets and part-plans in the Forster Collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum, they have been able to show how far ahead Dickens planned, and how month by month his books took shape. From his letters, and from the cover-designs, it has sometimes even been possible to show to what extent his "central idea" was clearly in mind from the very beginning, and how far the plan of the novel was evolved about it. There is no doubt that this is the proper way for the novels to be studied if they are to be fully understood; and anyone who is interested in learning how Dickens set to work must turn to all of these books to find out.

Even so, once one has informed oneself from a study of these works, there is still room for differences in opinion. They have carried this branch of enquiry much further than it had reached some years ago; but something still depends on how one interprets some of the new evidence. Professor Monod, for example, tends to emphasise how, even as early as *Pickwick*, each number is not as "complete in itself" as Dickens claimed, and how several of them rise to a climax and leave the reader guessing about what is to come. Mrs. Tillotson, on the other hand, wisely points out that "it goes without saying that the endings do not deal in the grosser kinds of suspense." Of course, it goes "without saying" now that the evidence has been looked at, but one might just as well have said that until recently many critics took it "for granted."

Even now, however, there is no standard edition of Dickens's

works which includes even a note on how each novel was published in its original parts. Interesting as it is to follow them in the same manner as their first readers, with an eye on Dickens's dexterity in passing from one number to another, or with a sympathetic concern for the difficulties in which he sometimes involved himself, there is no convenient way of doing this.

It is for this reason that a series of plans has been drawn up and set out below, showing the number-division of Dickens's monthly serials. A similar series, showing the division of the weekly serials, will follow in a subsequent number of *The Dickensian*. On re-reading the novels, anyone who is interested can now more easily see how Dickens dealt with the difficulties of serialisation, and can form his own opinion on how successful he was in overcoming them.

### THE NUMBER DIVISION OF THE MONTHLY SERIALS

#### *Pickwick Papers*

1836.

|           |            |            |            |
|-----------|------------|------------|------------|
| April—I,  | ch. 1-2.   | Sept.—VI,  | ch. 15-17. |
| May—II,   | ch. 3-5.   | Oct.—VII,  | ch. 18-20. |
| June—III, | ch. 6-8.   | Nov.—VIII, | ch. 21-23. |
| July—IV,  | ch. 9-11.  | Dec.—IX,   | ch. 24-26. |
| Aug.—V,   | ch. 12-14. |            |            |

1837.

|             |            |              |            |
|-------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| Jan.—X,     | ch. 27-28. | July—XV,     | ch. 40-42. |
| Feb.—XI,    | ch. 29-31. | Aug.—XVI,    | ch. 43-45. |
| Mar.—XII,   | ch. 32-33. | Sept.—XVII,  | ch. 46-48. |
| April—XIII, | ch. 34-36. | Oct.—XVIII,  | ch. 49-51. |
| May—XIV,    | ch. 37-39. | Nov.—XIX/XX, | ch. 52-56. |

There were two chapters 28, an error entailing fresh numeration in later editions. There was no publication in June 1837, owing to the death of Mary Hogarth.

#### *Oliver Twist*

1837.

|               |           |               |            |
|---------------|-----------|---------------|------------|
| Feb., Book I, | ch. 1-2.  | Aug., Book I, | ch. 12-13. |
| Mar., „ I,    | ch. 3-4.  | Sept., „ I,   | ch. 14-15. |
| April, „ I,   | ch. 5-6.  | Nov., „ I,    | ch. 16-17. |
| May, „ I,     | ch. 7-8.  | Dec., „ I,    | ch. 18-19. |
| July, „ I,    | ch. 9-11. |               |            |

1838.

|               |            |                |            |
|---------------|------------|----------------|------------|
| Jan., Book I, | ch. 20-21. | July, Book II, | ch. 12-14. |
| Feb., „ II,   | ch. 1-3.   | Aug., „ III,   | ch. 1-2.   |
| Mar., „ II,   | ch. 4-5.   | Sept., „ III,  | ch. 3-4.   |
| April, „ II,  | ch. 6-7.   | Oct., „ III,   | ch. 5-6.   |
| May, „ II,    | ch. 8-9.   | Nov., „ III,   | ch. 7-8.   |
| June, „ II,   | ch. 10-11. | Dec., „ III,   | ch. 9-11.  |

1839.

- Jan., Book III, ch. 11: resumed at: "Your tale is longest."  
Then follow two chapters 12.  
Feb., ,, III, No chapter number. Resumes at "Yes,"  
said Monks, scowling."  
Mar., ,, III, ch. 14-15.

Published in monthly instalments of about sixteen pages in *Bentley's Miscellany*. No instalment appeared in June 1837 owing to the death of Mary Hogarth, nor in October for the same year.

It was completed under different circumstances from the other monthly serials, since Dickens raced ahead and finished the whole work in time for publication in three volumes in November 1838, before it had finished appearing in the *Miscellany*.

The chapter-division is extremely confusing. There were fifty-four chapters as it appeared in serial form. In the three-volume edition of 1838, these were reduced to fifty-one, by re-numbering, and the division into books was dropped. All editions after 1847, however, have only fifty-three chapters, much as above except that chapters 30 and 31, and chapters 44 and 45, have been combined.

*Martin Chuzzlewit*

1843.

- |           |            |            |            |
|-----------|------------|------------|------------|
| Jan.—I,   | ch. 1-3.   | July—VII,  | ch. 16-17. |
| Feb.—II,  | ch. 4-5.   | Aug.—VIII, | ch. 18-20. |
| Mar.—III, | ch. 6-8.   | Sept.—IX,  | ch. 21-23. |
| April—IV, | ch. 9-10.  | Oct.—X,    | ch. 24-26. |
| May—V,    | ch. 11-12. | Nov.—XI,   | ch. 27-29. |
| June—VI,  | ch. 13-15. | Dec.—XII,  | ch. 30-32. |

1844.

- |            |            |              |            |
|------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| Jan.—XIII, | ch. 33-35. | May—XVII,    | ch. 45-47. |
| Feb.—XIV,  | ch. 36-38. | June—XVIII,  | ch. 48-50. |
| Mar.—XV,   | ch. 39-41. | July—XIX/XX, | ch. 51-54. |
| April—XVI, | ch. 42-44. |              |            |

*Dombey and Son*

1846.

- |          |          |           |           |
|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Oct.—I,  | ch. 1-4. | Dec.—III, | ch. 8-10. |
| Nov.—II, | ch. 5-7. |           |           |

1847.

- |            |            |            |            |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Jan.—IV,   | ch. 11-13. | July—X,    | ch. 29-31. |
| Feb.—V,    | ch. 14-16. | Aug.—XI,   | ch. 32-34. |
| Mar.—VI,   | ch. 17-19. | Sept.—XII, | ch. 35-38. |
| April—VII, | ch. 20-22. | Oct.—XIII, | ch. 39-41. |
| May—VIII,  | ch. 23-25. | Nov.—XIV,  | ch. 42-45. |
| June—IX,   | ch. 26-28. | Dec.—XV,   | ch. 46-48. |

1848.

Jan.—XVI, ch. 49-51.  
 Feb.—XVII, ch. 52-54.

Mar.—XVIII, ch. 55-57.  
 April—XIX/XX, ch. 58-62.

*David Copperfield*

1849.

May—I, ch. 1-3.  
 June—II, ch. 4-6.  
 July—III, ch. 7-9.  
 Aug.—IV, ch. 10-12.

Sept.—V, ch. 13-15.  
 Oct.—VI, ch. 16-18.  
 Nov.—VII, ch. 19-21.  
 Dec.—VIII, ch. 22-24.

1850.

Jan.—IX, ch. 25-27.  
 Feb.—X, ch. 28-31.  
 Mar.—XI, ch. 32-34.  
 April—XII, ch. 35-37.  
 May—XIII, ch. 38-40.  
 June—XIV, ch. 41-43.

July—XV, ch. 44-46.  
 Aug.—XVI, ch. 47-50.  
 Sept.—XVII, ch. 51-53.  
 Oct.—XVIII, ch. 54-57.  
 Nov.—XIX/XX, ch. 58-64.

*Bleak House*

1852.

Mar.—I, ch. 1-3.  
 April—II, ch. 5-7.  
 May—III, ch. 8-10.  
 June—IV, ch. 11-13.  
 July—V, ch. 14-16.

Aug.—VI, ch. 17-19.  
 Sept.—VII, ch. 20-22.  
 Oct.—VIII, ch. 23-25.  
 Nov.—IX, ch. 26-29.  
 Dec.—X, ch. 30-32.

1853.

Jan.—XI, ch. 33-35.  
 Feb.—XII, ch. 36-38.  
 Mar.—XIII, ch. 39-42.  
 April—XIV, ch. 43-46.  
 May—XV, ch. 47-49.

June—XVI, ch. 50-53.  
 July—XVII, ch. 54-56.  
 Aug.—XVIII, ch. 57-59.  
 Sept.—XIX/XX, ch. 60-67.

*Little Dorrit*

1855.

Dec.—I, Book. I: ch. 1-4.

1856.

Jan.—II, ch. 5-8.  
 Feb.—III, ch. 9-11.  
 Mar.—IV, ch. 12-14.  
 April—V, ch. 15-18.  
 May—VI, ch. 19-22.  
 June—VII, ch. 23-25.

July—VIII, ch. 26-29.  
 Aug.—IX, ch. 30-32.  
 Sept.—X, ch. 33-36.  
 Oct.—XI, Bk. II, ch. 1-4.  
 Nov.—XII, ch. 5-7.  
 Dec.—XIII, ch. 8-11.

1857.

Jan.—XIV, ch. 12-14.  
 Feb.—XV, ch. 15-18.  
 Mar.—XVI, ch. 19-22.

April—XVII, ch. 23-26.  
 May—XVIII, ch. 27-29.  
 June—XIX/XX, ch. 30-34.

*Our Mutual Friend*

1864.

|                        |                           |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| May—I, Bk. I: ch. 1-4. | Sept.—V, ch. 14-17.       |
| June—II, ch. 5-7.      | Oct.—VI, Bk. II: ch. 1-3. |
| July—III, ch. 8-10.    | Nov.—VII, ch. 4-6.        |
| Aug.—IV, ch. 11-13.    | Dec.—VIII, ch. 7-10.      |

1865.

|                            |                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Jan.—IX, ch. 11-13.        | July—XV, ch. 15-17.        |
| Feb.—X, ch. 14-16.         | Aug.—XVI, Bk. IV. ch. 1-4. |
| Mar.—XI, Bk. III: ch. 1-4. | Sept.—XVII, ch. 5-7.       |
| April—XII, ch. 5-7.        | Oct.—XVIII, ch. 8-11.      |
| May—XIII, ch. 8-10.        | Nov.—XIX/XX, ch. 12-17.    |
| June,—XIV, ch. 11-14.      |                            |

*The Mystery of Edwin Drood*

1870.

|                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| April—I, ch. 1-5.    | July—IV, ch. 13-16.  |
| May—II, ch. 6-9.     | Aug.—V, ch. 17-20.   |
| June—III, ch. 10-12. | Sept.—VI, ch. 21-23. |

*Edwin Drood* was published in monthly parts of the same length as before, but it was intended that there should be only a dozen of them counting the final, double-number as two.

## SEYMOUR ILLUSTRATING DICKENS IN 1834

By KATHLEEN TILLOTSON

IT is a curious fact that over a year before they collaborated in *Pickwick*, Robert Seymour had, though no doubt unwittingly, illustrated a story by Dickens. I do not think it has been previously noticed that a few pages of one of Dickens's early stories, "The Bloomsbury Christening," were printed in *Seymour's Comic Album; or Museum of Entertainment. A Perennial of Fun*, a small volume of extracts published by William Kidd and illustrated with wood-engravings "designed by Robert Seymour and engraved . . . by Samuel Slader." The passage extracted is the account of Dumps's journey in the omnibus, from the words "Monday was a fine day" to "No. 14 Great Russell-street"; it is entitled "The Omnibus" and occupies pp. 83-89 of the *Album*, being attributed at the end simply to the *Monthly Magazine*, where the story had appeared, unsigned, in April 1834. The single illustration, with the signature R.S., shows Dumps pursued by the "cad" of the *Admiral* bus after alighting without paying his fare.

The volume consists largely of similar borrowings from periodicals, including an extract from Marryat's *Jacob Faithful*, serialised in the *Metropolitan Magazine* of 1833-4, and others from *Blackwood's*, the *New Monthly*, and *Chambers' Journal*. It bears no date, but is probably identical with "Seymour's Comic Album, 1835," listed among books "Just Published" in the *Athenaeum*

SEYMOUR'S COMIC ALBUM. 89

"Hollo!" said that respectable person standing up on the box, and leaning with one hand on the roof of the omnibus. "Hollo, Tom! tell the gentleman if so be as how he feels aggrieved, we will take him up to the Edge-er (Edgeware) Road for nothing, and set him down at Doctrey-lane when we comes back. He can't reject that anyhow."

The argument was irresistible; Dumps paid the disputed sixpence, and in a quarter of an hour, was on the staircase of No. 14, Great Russell-street,—

[MONTHLY MAGAZINE.]



By Courtesy of the British Museum

of November 22nd, 1834, and evidently intended for the Christmas season of 1834. It must have followed the same publisher's *Odd Volume*, a similar scrap-book illustrated by Seymour and Robert Cruikshank, as the "extensive popularity" of this is referred to in the Preface of the *Album*; and *The Odd Volume* in its turn refers to *Cruikshank at Home* in three volumes, of which it was originally intended to make a fourth. The *English Catalogue* gives the date of 1834 for *Cruikshank at Home*. Evidently all these undated catchpenny volumes appeared in that year, and the British Museum's conjectural date of 1835 is a year out.



## DICKENS'S "OLD STAGE-COACHING HOUSE"

By WILLIAM J. CARLTON

IN the many volumes which have been written about "the Dickens country" Newbury finds no place; but it is certain that the small Berkshire town was well known to the novelist at the height of its prosperity as a great coaching centre and there are good grounds for believing that, in the guise of the Uncommercial Traveller, he revisited the scene of his earlier exploits as a newspaper reporter and recorded his impressions of the place after it had been ousted from its proud position by the railway.

When the Reformers of Bristol decided to give a dinner in honour of Lord John Russell on November 10th, 1835, Dickens was assigned with his colleague Thomas Beard to report the proceedings for the *Morning Chronicle*. As he had just arranged with his publisher, Macrone, for the issue of the collected *Sketches by Boz*, he was naturally reluctant to leave London at such a time. But the editor's instructions were imperative, and he was early astir on the morning of Saturday, November 7th. At 5 a.m. he sat down to write to Macrone:

"I never regretted anything in my life as much as I do the unpleasant circumstance of my having to start for Bristol this morning. The journey would not have been a very enviable one under ordinary circumstances, but the contents of your last night's note render it still more 'aggrawatin'.' . . . I am writing by candle-light shivering with cold, and choked with smoke. The fire has turned unaccountably white and dusty at the very moment when it *ought* to boil the kettle, and on the best calculation I am enabled to make at the moment I should say that event would occur about the time that I reach Hounslow Heath. I *think* it's rather a disagreeable morning, but I can't say exactly—because it's so foggy. My laundress, who is asthmatic, has dived into a closet—I suppose to prevent her cough annoying me—and is emitting from behind the door an uninterrupted succession of the most unearthly and hollow noises I ever heard. My portmanteau resolutely refuses to suffer itself to be locked, although it has been strapped and buckled and stood upon 'till no Guard will know it by that appellation, and rumours have just reached me that there 'an't no cabs on the stand'—conceive my feelings!"<sup>1</sup>

These little obstacles must have been overcome, for on the very next day Dickens wrote to his sub-editor at the *Morning Chronicle* office from the George and Pelican, Newbury. In conjunction with the *Morning Herald*, he and Beard had arranged for a horse express on the following Tuesday night from Marlborough to London, to go the whole distance at 13 miles an hour. "We go to Bristol to-day, and if we are equally fortunate in laying the chaise horses, I hope the packet will reach town by seven. As all the papers have arranged to leave Bristol the moment Russell is down, we have determined on adopting the same plan . . . The

<sup>1</sup> *Letters of Charles Dickens* (Nonesuch ed.), 1938, I, 49-50.



The George and Pelican Inn, Newbury, in 1835

*Times* has ordered a chaise and four the whole distance, so there is every probability of our beating them hollow . . . ”<sup>1</sup>

Another letter, written from the George and Pelican on the same day, was addressed to his fiancée, Catherine Hogarth: “ We arrived here yesterday afternoon at three o’clock, and were immediately installed into very comfortable quarters. The *Times* are before us and have completed their arrangements, but if we continue to be as successful in laying the horses we require between this place and Bristol, as we have been on that part of the road to town which we have already traversed, we are in confident expectation of beating them by two hours at least. We share the expense with the *Morning Herald*, and are living and travelling with two gentlemen from that paper. We leave this place for Bristol at twelve o’clock to-day, and I shall write you again by to-morrow’s post—I hope at greater length. I am in such a chaotic state of confusion just now, surrounded by maps, road-books, ostlers, and post-boys that I have not time to devote to anything but business—not even to *you*, though I have snatched a few moments to redeem my promise in . . . ”<sup>2</sup>

Standing almost midway between London and Bath, the George and Pelican was one of the most noted and best-conducted inns on the Great Western Road. It occupied a commanding position at the junction of crossroads leading to Oxford, Winchester, Bath and London (now the northern end of Broadway) with an extensive range of buildings in the rear, forming a quadrangular courtyard. The old Pelican garden, renowned for its fruit and vegetables, was in the Backway. Here too was the bowling green, which still remains. This was the stopping place for all coaches, of which 42 passed through the town every day. Nelson frequently stayed at the Pelican on his way to and from Bath, where his father lived for some time, and it was the subject of a cynical epigram:

“ The famous inn at Speenhamland  
That stands below the hill  
May well be called the Pelican  
From its enormous bill ! ”

Speenhamland (as that part of Newbury was called) resounded from morning till night with the crack of the whip, the rattle of wheels and the notes of the guard’s horn. The historic old hostelry had accommodation for a whole army of travellers, and as many as 300 horses were sometimes put up in its extensive range of stabling. An oil painting of the inn by a local artist, John Osgood, executed about the time of Dickens’s passage in 1835, shows Mrs. Botham, the active, bustling landlady; old Jennings, the head waiter; Tom Wilmot, the horse keeper, returning from the saddler’s shop with oil for the harness; “ Natty ” Watts, one of the old-fashioned four-horse coachmen; Jack Ashton, stud groom at the Pelican; John Franklin, the butcher; and Grant, coachman of the White Hart coach, who lived at Bath. In the foreground is the White Hart day coach, belonging to Messrs. Pickwick of Bath, immortalised by the comment of Sam Weller: “ I’m blest

<sup>1</sup> *Letters of Charles Dickens* (Nonesuch ed.), 1938, I, 50.

<sup>2</sup> *Mr. and Mrs. Charles Dickens: His Letters to Her*, ed. W. Dexter, 1935, pp. 31-32.

if they ain't had the imperence to put my master's name on that 'ere coach door!"<sup>1</sup>

Mrs. Eleanor Botham had taken over the management of the George and Pelican after her husband's death in 1827 and held it on lease until two years before her own demise in December 1846, when she gave it up to her successor, Joseph Hale. With the coming of the Great Western Railway the golden days of the coaching era were drawing to a close and the glories of the George and Pelican had departed.

Moved by some nostalgic impulse, Dickens would seem to have felt an urge to revisit, after an interval of ten years, the town which held such vivid memories for him. It is to this visit that we owe the graphic description of "An Old Stage-Coaching House," first published in *All the Year Round* on August 1st, 1863, and reprinted in *The Uncommercial Traveller*. The town is not named, but "it had been a great stage-coaching town in the great stage-coaching times, and the ruthless railways had killed and buried it." There can be little doubt that the town in question was Newbury and that the Dolphin's Head, where the Uncommercial Traveller elected to stay, was the old George and Pelican. It is entirely in accordance with the novelist's method to portray people and places with almost photographic accuracy while disguising them under fictitious names. Let us see whether Dickens's narrative conforms to this rule.

"The signboard chafed its rusty hooks outside the bow-window of my room, and was a shabby work. No visitor would have denied that the Dolphin was dying by inches, but he showed no bright colours. He had once served another master; there was a newer streak of paint below him, displaying with inconsistent freshness the legend, By J. Mellows."

Everything points to the Uncommercial Traveller's visit having been made in the summer or autumn of 1845. He had alighted at the railway station seven miles away. The Berks and Hants Railway was then under construction and until it was formally opened in 1847 the nearest station was Reading, a distance of 17 miles. It is possible that a service may have been in operation from Reading as far as Midgham, seven miles from Newbury; or that Dickens, writing many years afterwards, may have misread his notes or have intentionally substituted seven for 17 to make identification of the place more difficult.

"I had no business in the town—I never have any business in any town," he wrote; "but I had been caught by the fancy that I would come and look at it in its degeneracy. My purpose was fitly inaugurated by the Dolphin's Head, which everywhere expressed past coachfulness and present coachlessness. Coloured prints of coaches, starting, arriving, changing horses, coaches in the sunshine, coaches in the snow, coaches in the wind, coaches in the mist and rain, coaches on the King's birthday, coaches in all circumstances compatible with their triumph and victory, but never in the act of breaking down or overturning, pervaded the house. Of these works of art, some, framed and not glazed, had holes in them; the varnish of others had become so brown and

<sup>1</sup> Walter Money, F.S.A., *A Popular History of Newbury*, 1905.

cracked, that they looked like overdone pie-crust; the designs of others were almost obliterated by the flies of many summers. Broken glasses, damaged frames, lop-sided hanging, and consignment of incurable cripples to places of refuge in dark corners, attested the desolation of the rest."

Mr. Walter Money, F.S.A., the historian of Newbury, clearly believed this passage to refer to the George and Pelican, for he incorporated it with some slight changes in an account of the inn published in 1895,<sup>1</sup> though for some obscure reason he omitted to mention its source. In Mrs. Botham's time, according to Mr. Money, there was a speciality for dressing everything at the George and Pelican, and in the large dining-room on the ground floor, nearly 40 feet long, where the higher class traveller used to dine, the most tempting fare was always ready, varying of course with the season, with the choicest fruits and vegetables from the renowned orchards and gardens. It was in this room, incidentally, that the Berkshire magistrates, in May 1795, had formulated the system of paying wages out of the rates which became known as the Speenhamland Act. Here is Dickens's description of the same room when he revisited it in 1845:

"The old room on the ground floor where the passengers of the Highflyer used to dine, had nothing in it but a wretched show of twigs and flower-pots in the broad window to hide the nakedness of the land, and in a corner little Mellows's perambulator, with even its parasol-head turned despondently to the wall. The other room, where post-horse company used to wait while relays were getting ready down the yard, still held its ground, but was as airless as I conceive a hearse to be: insomuch that Mr. Pitt, hanging high against the partition (with spots on him like port wine, though it is mysterious how port wine ever got squirted up there), had good reason for perking his nose and sniffing. The stopperless cruets on the spindle-shanked sideboard were in a miserably dejected state: the anchovy sauce having turned blue some years ago, and the cayenne pepper (with a scoop in it like a small model of a wooden leg) having turned solid. The old fraudulent candles which were always being paid for and never used, were burnt out at last; but their tall stilts of candlesticks still lingered, and still outraged the human intellect by pretending to be silver. The mouldy old unreformed Borough Member, with his right hand buttoned up in the breast of his coat, and his back characteristically turned on bales of petitions from his constituents, was there too; and the poker which never had been among the fire-irons, lest post-horse company should overstim the fire, was *not* there, as of old."

Dickens did not mention the spacious cellars, although it is safe to say that he had sampled their contents in his reporting days. Perfect marvels of order and systematic detail, they were stocked with Botham's famous "Beeswing" and other wines of the rarest vintages, which old Jennings always saw were brought up fresh and cool from the deep, damp bins, and the equally famous "Pelican Home-Brewed," known all along the road.

<sup>1</sup> "The Old Bowling Green, Speenhamland, and some of its Associations," in *Newbury Weekly News*, April 25th. 1895.

Pursuing his researches in the Dolphin's Head, the traveller found it sorely shrunk. "When J. Mellows came into possession, he had walled off half the bar, which was now a tobacco-shop with its own entrance in the yard—the once glorious yard where the postboys, whip in hand, and always buttoning their waistcoats at the last moment, used to come running forth to mount and away. A 'Scientific Shoeing-Smith and Veterinary Surgeon' had further encroached upon the yard: and a grimly satirical Jobber, who announced himself as having to let 'a neat one-horse fly, and a one-horse cart,' had established his business, himself, and his family, in a part of the extensive stables. Another part was lopped clean off from the Dolphin's Head, and now comprised a chapel, a wheelwright's, and a Young Men's Mutual Improvement and Discussion Society (in a loft): the whole forming a back lane."

From another writer on local history we learn that in the early days of the Victorian era there was a working men's institute at Speenhamland, which fulfilled its mission and expired. Two or three years later Mr. H. R. Eyre, of Shaw House, the owner of the Pelican and adjoining property, provided a club-room in a part of the Pelican premises, but it remained open only for one winter.<sup>1</sup> The 1847 Post Office directory shows that a veterinary surgeon (Abner Clarkson), a coach proprietor (Josiah Hunt), and three shoeing smiths were then established in Speenhamland, although their exact location is not specified. But let the Uncommercial Traveller continue:

"Sauntering forth into the town, by way of the covered and pillared entrance to the Dolphin's Yard, once redolent of soup and stable-litter, now redolent of musty disuse, I paced the street." (The covered and pillared entrance stands where it did just inside the large yard, but is now the entrance to a doctor's surgery.) "It was a hot day, and the little sun-blinds of the shops were all drawn down . . . Most of the harness-makers and corn-dealers were gone the way of the coaches, but it was a pleasant recognition of the eternal procession of children down that old original steep incline, the Valley of the Shadow, that those tradesmen were mostly succeeded by vendors of sweetmeats and cheap toys. The opposition house to the Dolphin, once famous as the New White Hart, had long collapsed. In a fit of abject depression, it had cast whitewash on its windows, and boarded up its front door, and reduced itself to a side entrance; but even that had proved a world too wide for the Literary Institution which had been its last phase; for the Institution had collapsed too, and of the ambitious letters of its inscription on the White Hart's front, all had fallen off but these:

L                      Y   I N S                      T

—suggestive of Lamentably Insolvent."

The minute book of the Newbury Literary and Scientific Institution—always referred to by the shorter name, at least in this century—is still preserved in the town archives. It shows that on April 11th, 1843, the Institution had rented a room in Speenhamland over the premises of William Hall, bookseller and

<sup>1</sup> Frank H. Stillman, M.J.I., *Newbury during the Victorian Era*, Newbury, 1893.

printer, who was in business just opposite the George and Pelican. On May 21st, 1844, an adjoining room was taken, and both rooms were given up in the following December. If Dickens visited Newbury in the summer of 1845 the name, or part of it, may still have been visible from the inn. Incidentally, two vendors of toys (Mrs. Lucy Biddis and Miss Ann Goddard) are listed in the 1847 directory.

Dickens went on to write of the neighbouring market-place and of his conversation with a coachmaker, of whom he enquired "whether there happened to be any fragment of an old stage-coach here." The reply was "No, there ain't," but that if a "po-shay" would do and he would keep straight along in the direction indicated he would see one, "if you go fur enough."

"I went the way he had turned me, and I came to the Beer-shop with the sign of the First and Last, and was out of the town on the old London Road. I came to the Turnpike, and I found it, in its silent way, eloquent respecting the change that had fallen on the road. The Turnpike-house was all overgrown with ivy; and the Turnpike-keeper, unable to get a living out of the tolls, plied the trade of a cobbler. Not only that, but his wife sold ginger-beer, and, in the very window of espial through which the Toll-makers of old times used with awe to behold the grand London coaches coming on at a gallop, exhibited for sale little barber's-poles of sweetstuff in a sticky lantern."

The turnpike house still stands on the old London road some two miles from the site of the George and Pelican, and not far from it is the Greyhound Tavern which may be the successor of the First and Last, though there was also a White House in 1847 which exists to-day almost one mile from the Broadway. Coming in view of certain allotment-gardens by the roadside, the traveller saw what he describes as "surely, the poorest superannuated post-chaise left on earth, plumped down on the clayey soil among a ragged growth of vegetables." He made his way back to the old London road by the further end of the allotment-gardens, scrambled through a hedge and down a steep bank, and came upon a little spare man who sat breaking stones by a grass-grown milestone, which looked like a tombstone erected over the grave of the London road. The post-chaise has long since disappeared and the milestone no longer adjoins the allotment gardens, but the gardens themselves are still to be seen and are devoted to their original purpose.

Retracing his steps at the dinner-hour approached, the Un-commercial Traveller made his way back to the George and Pelican (alias the Dolphin's Head), to find the proprietor standing disconsolately in the gateway. The conversation which followed supplies another piece of evidence in support of the thesis that Dickens's great stage-coaching town was Newbury and his old stage-coaching house the George and Pelican.

"'What we want,' said Mellows, pulling off his hat, and making as if he emptied it of the last load of Disgust that had exuded from his brain, before he put it on again for another load; 'what we want, is a Branch. The Petition for the Branch Bill is in the

coffee-room. Would you put your name to it? ' I found the document in question stretched out flat on the coffee-room table by the aid of certain weights from the kitchen, and I gave it the additional weight of my uncommercial signature. To the best of my belief, I bound myself to the modest statement that universal traffic, happiness, prosperity, and civilisation, together with unbounded national triumph in competition with the foreigner, would infallibly flow from the Branch."

Two projects for linking Newbury with London by rail were being advocated about this time. One of them, via Pangbourne by the Great Western to Paddington, was not favoured by the Corporation; but they gave their approval at a meeting on January 5th, 1844, to a proposed application to parliament for a railway from Newbury via Basingstoke by the London and South Western to Waterloo. The sponsors of this scheme were Messrs. Gray and Godwin. Their application was doubtless supported by other residents, and they may well have organised a local petition to parliament.

Early in 1846 a Bill for the construction of an Oxford, Southampton, Gosport and Portsmouth Railway was introduced into the House of Commons. The promoters of this Bill presented a petition on February 6th asking leave to bring it in, and their petition was referred to the Select Committee on Petitions for Private Bills. Among a number of petitions for and against was one from Newbury in favour of the Bill. Unfortunately the petitions themselves, all of which were referred to the Select Committee, have disappeared. The Committee reported on April 23rd that the Bill did not comply with the standing Orders of the House and it was dropped. Had the petitions survived, it is not unreasonable to assume that among the signatures appended to one or other of them would have been found that of Charles Dickens.

I am indebted to Mr. P. H. Sellwood, Hon. Borough Archivist of Newbury, for valuable help in my investigations and for accompanying me on a tour of the area, following as far as possible in the footsteps of the Uncommercial Traveller in an attempt to identify such local features as time has preserved.

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## RECENT DICKENSIANA

" Dickens's Use of his American Experiences in *Martin Chuzzlewit*," Harry Stone.

*Publications of Modern Language Association*, New York. June.

" Dickens the Philanthropist, an unpublished letter," Ben W. Griffith, Jr. *Nineteenth Century Fiction*, September.

" Sarah Gamp," Dorothy Margaret Stuart. *Contemporary Review*, October.

" Charles Dickens and the Oswego System," John Manning. *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Michigan State University, October.

" The Third Man at Newgate," W. J. Carlton. *Review of English Studies*, November.

" Benevolent Teachers of Youth," V. C. Clinton-Baddeley. *Cornhill*, Autumn.

" The Rationale of Dickens's Death Rate," Wm. R. Clarke.

" New Letters of Charles Dickens to John Forster," " How the Letters were Found," K. J. Fielding. " The Significance of the Letters," " The Letters Themselves," Gerald G. Grubb. *Boston Univ. Studies in English*, Vol. II, No. 3, Autumn, 1956 (1957 ?).

" The Boz Ball," Ada Nisbet. *American Heritage*, December.

# THE LOVE INTEREST IN *BARNABY RUDGE*

21

By FRANK A. GIBSON

CHAPTER xxxii of *Barnaby Rudge* ends with the words: "And the world went on turning round, as usual, for five years, concerning which this Narrative is silent." This five-year gap in the story seems to have rather worried some modern commentators. Earlier ones, such as Gissing, Chesterton and "Alain," were content to ignore it, but a more recent writer, Mr. A. M. Lillishaw, in an otherwise very appreciative article, "The Case of *Barnaby Rudge*" (*The Dickensian*, June 1948), suggests that "a certain lack of cohesion" in the book may have been due to "its long period of gestation and the many changes of programme during its antenatal life." His own feeling is that "as an historical novel *Barnaby Rudge* is unsatisfactory; it is not really fiction and it is not really history."

The fact is, of course, whether unsatisfactory or no, that the fiction in *Barnaby Rudge* is wholly fictional and the history at least as historical as most history. The result is not a hotchpotch in which neither can be distinguished from the other. Some may prefer the bowdlerised and romanticised historical method of Scott, Lytton, Ainsworth, G.P.R. James and Thackeray, authors in whom no doubt Dickens was always interested; but he should not be blamed for neglecting to imitate them.

And, with the utmost respect, the conclusion may be questioned that "later he [Dickens] thought of the Gordon Riots." The first and announced title of the still unwritten book was "Gabriel Vardon, the Locksmith of London." It is difficult to see what scope there is here for "a romantic story of his usual type," if one rules out the riots. I would guess that, on the contrary, it was always Dickens's intention to reveal the henpecked Vardon (later Varden) as a dauntless hero in the great riot scene before Newgate. (Incidentally, as foreshadowed in an early chapter, the riots and Vardon's heroic rôle, were to play their part in the reformation of the locksmith's wife.)

Moreover, in the Preface, admittedly published at the close of the work, Dickens pointed out that he had been led to *project* the tale by the circumstance that, so far as he knew, no account of the Gordon riots had been introduced into any work of fiction.

But the real question is: Why start five years too soon, if you are going to involve your characters in the Riots of '80? The answer is to be found not in any muddled state of mind in which Dickens composed the story, nor in any change of plan such as undoubtedly occurred after Dickens began *The Old Curiosity Shop*, but in the "love interest" which forms so essential a part of *Barnaby Rudge*. It is no mere coincidence that the five-year gap starts with John Chester telling the son who has disappointed his matrimonial hopes to "go to the Devil, at my express desire."

Edward Chester did not go to the Devil. Like the character in *The Ingoldsby Legends*, he "did not go to Jericho, he went to Mr. Cobb," and for all we know to the contrary Cobb may have been the name of Edward's school friend in the West Indies who

proved such a friend in need to the young lover when he turned up there without profession or prospects. In the five years' interval (as we learn from Joe Willet's briefest of summaries in chapter lxxviii), he had got on so well that he was now in England on business of his own and was going back again speedily, taking with him young Joe, who would carry his one arm away with him and "make the most of it."

Suppose Edward Chester had succeeded in his first intention, wrecked by his wicked father's machinations, and married Emma Haredale in 1775, what would have been his prospects? Could she have been reasonably expected to accompany him to the West Indies, to meet the school friend? Hardly. The alternative might have been a trip to the continent (on Emma's limited means) to facilitate the marriage and Edward's conversion to his wife's faith.<sup>1</sup> And, after that, what? Possibly employment as a Jesuit missionary to England at the instance of Catholic friends. Small wonder that during the writing of *Barnaby Rudge* John Forster expressed some concern as to Edward Chester's future. He need not have worried, as, in effect, Dickens told him. There was no hesitation or change of plan *there*. "Mr. Dickin," the rejected of the banking Beadnells, did not intend his *protégé* to be defeated by the mercenary John Chester. Hence the "puzzling" gap of five years.

Admittedly, if Dickens had not had so many irons in the fire, he might have followed Edward to the West Indies, as he followed Martin Chuzzlewit to the Mississippi. We might have gone with him to serve with Joe "in America, where the war is." *Barnaby Rudge* would have been a longer book, but would it have been more interesting? Again, hardly. For the theme upon which Dickens had set his heart was the triumph of young love, triumphant and even finding its apotheosis in the sorry welter of the Riots. Surely the surprise of this was worth all the dull accounts of Edward's making good in the West Indies, of Joe's faithful service at Savannah. So those five years had to be. Rome was not built in a day, and young love—Edward's and Joe's—could not prepare its triumph in a lesser space of time.

And that the marriages were equally happy is clear. Emma and Edward are not specifically mentioned in the "parting glance", but Edward's foot on the ladder of sound commercial enterprise coupled with his own and his wife's natural nobility is proof enough. Dolly is, of course, in different case, but if she was the daughter of her mother she was also the child of her honest sire. And there was no Miggs.

It is odd that the idea should have got around that *Barnaby Rudge* is defective in chronology, for in this respect it may well be the most exact of all the novels. It is a tale of two years, just as much as Dickens's other historical novel is *A Tale of Two Cities*. The first year, we are told in chapter i, is 1775, and the month is March. It is still "early in the season", but "warm and genial weather", when Mr. Chester walks through the Forest for his talk with Emma Haredale; and this is only shortly before the final interview with his son which precedes the five-year gap.

<sup>1</sup> It would be wrong, however, to assume the inevitability of Edward's conversion—cf. Sir Richard Burton and his very devout wife.

The second year, after the period "concerning which this narrative is silent", begins "one wintry evening, early in the year of Our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty", and continues until after the riots in the sultry summer of that year.

There is little more excuse for the suggestion that "nothing whatever" is said about the happenings in the intervening five years. It is true that Dickens prematurely remarks that the narrative is to be silent, but as it turned out there is actually, in chapter 45, a full and interesting retrospect of Barnaby's life with his mother and Grip in their country retreat during the "missing" period.

## GEORGINA HOGARTH

*Georgina Hogarth and the Dickens Circle*, by Arthur A. Adrian. Oxford University Press, 30s.

"My life has been a curious one," wrote Georgina Hogarth shortly after the death of Dickens, and certainly, during her ninety years, she knew some strange reversals of fortune and reputation. Emerging as a lively girl of fifteen from a crowded, shabby home into the brilliant light of her brother-in-law's circle, she developed into one of its principal assets, but was immersed after sixteen years in a horrible scandal, the subject of slanders in clubs and newspapers. Reappearing soon afterwards as the quiet, capable maiden aunt and housekeeper of Gadshill, she disappeared at forty-three into many years of grief-stricken obscurity, only at the end of her life attaining celebrity as the grand old lady of the Dickensians. This atmosphere of reverence did not long survive her death, however, and after Sir Henry Dickens's censorship was removed, the iconoclasts soon defaced her image. She was depicted as a subtle schemer, working to oust her sister from her home, and persuading Dickens to send his sons to the colonies so that she could enjoy his undivided attention—at least as much of it as he could spare from Ellen Ternan. Thomas Wright introduced this new and sinister interpretation of Georgina's character to the world, Miss Storey's conversations with Mrs. Perugini supported it, and Dame Una Pope Hennessey confirmed it with a specious show of scholarly impartiality. Professor Adrian has now come to the defence, not by any smashing counter attack, but by slowly building up the character of Georgina, from the evidence of her own letters, the opinions of contemporaries and the memories of those who knew her in old age. On the whole this is an admirable piece of work, unprejudiced, careful and well-composed so that a convincing portrait of a shrewd and warm-hearted woman emerges, developing naturally through a long life.

For the early years materials are scanty, and though Professor Adrian has traced the peregrinations of the Hogarth family from Edinburgh, through Halifax to London and the career of Georgina's father as lawyer, newspaper editor and musical critic, he has not suggested a reason for the persistent poverty with which the family struggled. Mr. Hogarth was a quiet, cultivated, hard-working gentleman, and it is doubtful if he found dusty rooms and unpaid bills as pleasantly Bohemian as Professor Adrian suggests. What about Mrs. Hogarth who was to play a

crucial part in the separation of Dickens and his wife and to be denounced by him as a wicked woman, responsible for the slanders on Georgina and Ellen Ternan? She seems to have been rather unbalanced and her affection for her children took extravagant forms. She remained unconscious for a week after Mary's death, while the repudiation of Catherine evidently so unhinged her that there were no lengths to which she would not go in revenge. It is clear that even earlier, Dickens thought her a foolish woman and a bad influence on Catherine, and I have wondered if "The Old Soldier" in *David Copperfield* was not inspired by his mother-in-law. However, Professor Adrian does not discuss her character or influence on Georgina, but takes his heroine straight into the Dickens Circle, which he tries to picture through her eyes. At this period there is little first-hand information about her reactions, and he has to rely on Dickens's references to her and on rather fanciful interpretations of what she would have felt about foreign travel, entertainments at Tavistock House and the various characters she met. Fortunately in 1869, she made a life-long friend in Mrs. James Fields, who, with her husband, the Bostonian publisher, had fallen under the spell of Dickens during his recent American tour. Henceforward Georgina's correspondence across the Atlantic, gives a complete picture of her character and views, and throws much new light on Dickens, his family and friends. In addition, Professor Adrian has drawn on Mrs. Fields's unpublished diaries for many interesting comments, and on Georgina's letters to the family solicitor for practical and often painful details of her struggles to fulfil her responsibilities to her nephews and nieces after Dickens's death. These materials should dispel any idea of an illicit romance between Dickens and his sister-in-law. To him she was always a domestic figure, the girl whom he had trained to be a competent housekeeper and secretary, who had lightened his burdens, cared for his children, and had become his confidante, "his best friend". To her, he was clearly a glamorous hero, completely filling her horizon but as he had become her brother-in-law when she was nine years old, she never thought of him in any other relationship. Her love for him was so free from jealousy and possessiveness that it was extended in later life to all who had shared it. She was not unaware, however, of the sacrifices her devotion as sister and aunt had entailed. After Dickens's death she confessed to Mrs. Fields that her life had not been "the ideal of a happy woman's existence—and I have often felt it hard and wondered whether it was all a mistake and a waste". She had refused a possible marriage, quarrelled with her family, had been the subject of slander, and had held, after Mrs. Dickens had departed, an anomalous position in the household. Yet when it was all over she knew she would not have changed it for "the brightest and most prosperous position any woman could have had." For the remaining forty-seven years of her life she was sustained by the Beloved Memory in the difficult task of caring for her nephews and nieces, and not till the end of the Century when only the three fittest had survived, could she relax into the rôle of a benevolent great-aunt in a lace cap, the guest of honour at Dickensian reunions.

Professor Adrian is to be congratulated on his portrait of Georgina. He is not quite so successful in his attempt to show Dickens in his relations with her. The extracts from his letters nearly all deal with complaints of ill-health, financial worries, and his sons' misdemeanours, and emphasise his demands on Georgina's time and attention, while omitting his fun and enthusiasm and his consideration for her. One gains a gloomy impression of life at Gadshill, and wonders why Georgina felt the world had crashed into ruins when Dickens died.

Conversely Professor Adrian seems to have a curiously Puritan attitude to the gayer aspects of Dickens's tastes, quoting with approval Mrs. Carlyle's sneers at the lavishness of his dinner table, and unfavourably contrasting his Cockney exuberance with the genteel poverty of the Hogarths. Whenever Dickens gives a party or buys a house or furniture, it is attributed to his vanity and desire to impress, never to his genuine tastes and needs. In his efforts to show how much Dickens owed to Georgina, Professor Adrian overlooks, as she never did, how in a sense, she owed everything to him. Unless this is brought out, her forty-seven years of devotion to the Beloved Memory are inexplicable. On Dickens's separation from his wife and the ensuing scandal, Professor Adrian writes fairly and cautiously, not going an inch beyond the available documents. The same might be said of his discussion of Ellen Ternan, but here a weakness in his method becomes apparent. He does not attempt to weigh the value of one document against another, but accepts them all, even where they are contradictory—Thomas Wright, the aged Mrs. Perugini's confidences, contemporary letters and diaries, friendly, hostile and ignorant witnesses. For instance, he follows Wright in saying that Ellen was cold to Dickens, and even suggests that Georgina suffered sympathetically from his disillusionment. Yet Ellen's daughter is quoted as recalling Georgina as one of her mother's dearest friends, a friendship only bestowed according to Professor Adrian, on those who had truly loved him. He also quotes Mrs. Fields of Boston (to whom Dickens had apparently confided his romance) rhapsodising in her diary over "the intense joy of his beloved", on her re-union with him after his American tour in 1868. If Ellen was cold and mercenary, neither Dickens nor Georgina seemed to have noticed it. It is time some of the mud was washed off her effigy, now that Georgina has been attended to.

Neither does the contemporary evidence for Katie's relationship with her mother tally with later accounts, where she is represented as championing her mother and rather hostile to her aunt. Nor is there any reason to doubt that she was in love with Charles Collins when she married him, though she may have found this hard to believe later, when the memory of his long years of invalid existence and a happy second marriage had intervened.

These are small matters but they subtract from the value of a book of which the great merit is its documentary authority, and which is blessedly free from psycho-analytical flights of fancy.

There are a few errors of fact which might be corrected in a second edition. Mary Boyle, seven years older than Mrs. Watson, was not her niece, but a distant cousin. The mysterious "she"

to whose house Dickens refused to go, and who wanted advice about "her boy", cannot be Mrs. Dickens, in spite of the attribution in the Nonesuch Letters. Probably it was Helen Dickens, Alfred's widow, of whose importunities Dickens was weary and who had a boy to whom he sent £25 from America. And "the marriage" he says he could not have borne if he had not been reading, does not refer to his own married life, but, as is clear



The Girl at the Waterfall.

Daniel Maclise, R.A.

from the context, to Clara White's wedding to which he had been invited.

A word should be said in praise of the illustrations which enhance the value of the book. My only regret is that they do not start with "The Girl at the Waterfall," by Maclise, which shows a carefree, barefooted Georgina of fifteen, at the time she first joined the Dickens household. In the charming portrait by Augustus Egg, she is already bending over the household tasks which were to occupy her for the rest of her life.

PANSY PAKENHAM

# DICKENS AND DOLBY

By JAMES G. OLLÉ

## I.

THERE are but few of Dickens's friends whose lives have not been investigated and recorded, either by virtue of their own achievements, or because of their friendship with Dickens. George Dolby is the most notable exception. This is a remarkable fact, because during the last four years of Dickens's life, no one was more closely associated with him than Dolby, who was the manager of his readings. Furthermore, in *Charles Dickens as I knew him*, Dolby gave to the world a vivid and invaluable account of this tumultuous and tragic period, for which every Dickensian should be grateful.

Dolby took over the management of the readings early in 1866. Dickens and Dolby had presumably met each other before then, for Dolby says "I had known Mr. Dickens for some time previously," and adds "... he had known me, and my reputation as a manager, for some years." But they could not have known each other very well, for when they first set forth on their travels they took stock of each other in a markedly furtive manner. Before long, however, they were on the most cordial terms, and remained firm friends until Dickens's death.

Dickens's history, up to the year 1866, is well known. From the time of *Pickwick* onwards there can be hardly a day which we cannot account for. It is otherwise with Dolby, whose life story, up to the time he became Dickens's manager, is almost a complete blank. He was the brother of Madame Charlotte Helen Sainton-Dolby (1821-1885), the famous contralto, who is casually mentioned by Forster as being a friend of Dickens. But when and where he was born, and what exactly he did before Messrs. Chappell engaged him as their "representative and manager" for the third series of Dickens's professional readings, which they were sponsoring, we do not know. Evidently he was a man of substance at that time, for he had a family and a charming home at Ross-on-Wye, in Herefordshire.

We do know his appearance and something of his character. As to the former, Dickens described him as "a big man." He was, in fact, tall, thick-set and bald. He had a stammer and a loud laugh. He had a fund of humorous stories; he retailed gossip; mostly he "talked shop." According to Percy Fitzgerald, he was "wonderfully thick-skinned." "He minded nothing, felt nothing, he would see anyone, say anything, or do anything." He was fond of slang expressions. On one occasion he told Dickens that someone had completely "bested" him. "Where on earth," said Dickens, "did you get that word?" (But Dickens himself was not above using slang in conversation. When the bookings for a reading at Bath were poor he complained of "the mouldiness of the let"!)

To Percy Fitzgerald, artist, scholar and man-of-letters (though without enduring talent in any of these capacities), Dolby was not quite a gentleman. "He was not over-refined, but loud and

a little noisy." Mark Twain described him, in a deadly phrase, as a "gladsome gorilla." We may suppose, then, that Dolby lacked style and charm. He was a bluff, hearty, earthy man, who would probably have been very much at home as the manager of a music-hall.

On the credit side it must be said that Dolby was extremely capable, energetic, untiring, loyal and undismayed by adversity. If he was, indeed, tough and thick-skinned, then truly he had need to be. No man of ordinary sensibilities would have survived the managerial hazards of the American tour.

Fitzgerald's portrait of Dolby must be accepted with caution. Dickens knew Dolby more intimately and we know that Dickens admired him and had some affection for him. And he trusted him implicitly. "He never gave me an order," said Dolby, "to do anything in connection with our affairs, but always suggested his wishes by saying, 'Don't you think *we* had better do,' etc., and if on any occasion I consulted him in times of difficulty, his frequent reply was, 'Do as you like, and don't bother me.'"

In earlier years Dickens would have trusted nobody thus far with his personal affairs, but during the period of these final readings, and particularly while he was in America, his health was so poor that he was quite content to trust Dolby in everything, knowing that he would never do so in vain.

Dickens had every reason to be grateful to Dolby. All the same, had he found him a boor, he would surely have said so. But apparently he never did. When they were on their first tour together Dickens wrote to Forster "Dolby . . . is an agreeable companion, an excellent manager, and a good fellow." In several letters from America he testified to his worth. To his son, Charles, he wrote from Boston (November 30th, 1867), "Dolby is nearly worked off his legs; nothing can exceed his energy and good humour." Later, when his health was a cause for grave anxiety, he wrote to Mamie, from the same city, "Dolby is as tender as a woman and as watchful as a doctor. He never leaves me during the reading now, but sits at the side of the platform and keeps his eye upon me all the time."

In all Dickens's letters I know of only one reference to Dolby which might be construed as being critical of him. In a letter to James T. Fields, written aboard the *Russia*, which was taking him home from the American tour, Dickens wrote: "Dolby, sitting opposite to me at breakfast, always has the following items: a large dish of porridge into which he casts slices of butter and a quantity of sugar. Two cups of tea. A steak. Irish stew. Chutnee and marmalade." From this we may suppose that Dolby's appetite, like his conversation, was more hearty than refined.

Dickens and Dolby travelled thousands of miles together. They endured long train journeys by day and by night, during which Dickens was nervous when the train was an express and fretful when it was slow. Together they made the best of poor fare in bad hotels; endured snow and ice, gale and flood; battled with jostling crowds of Dickens's admirers; repulsed prying journalists; plotted against shameless ticket-speculators; and

evaded over-zealous tax-gatherers. To Dickens, despite his increasing ailments and infirmities, there was always the exhilarating tonic of the actual readings. For Dolby there was the infinite labour of the business arrangements and often a rich harvest of abuse. Thus: "Dolby continues to be the most unpopular man in America (mainly because he can't get four thousand people into a room that holds two thousand), and is reviled in print daily."

Dolby was well paid for his exertions. He cleared nearly £3,000 from the American tour alone. But his perpetual regard for Dickens's comfort, and his constant concern for Dickens's health, suggest that he was bound to Dickens by stronger ties than those of a contract. In his account of the strenuous American tour Dolby says: "I used to steal into his room at all hours of the night and early morning, to see if he were awake or in want of anything; always though to find him wide awake and as cheerful and jovial as circumstances would admit, never in the least complaining and only reproaching me for not taking my night's rest." Dolby had every reason to be anxious, for the strain of the readings brought Dickens to the state when he was "seldom eating and drinking, and scarcely ever sleeping." There were nights when neither of them could rest and they sat up playing cribbage until (as Dickens said) "neither of us could bear to speak to the other any more."

Dolby exercised his broad sense of humour to the limit in order to revive Dickens's jaded spirits. Percy Fitzgerald testified to this, and, somewhat disapprovingly, records an example of it which he witnessed. The scene was the Royal Hotel, Belfast. "After the reading," said Fitzgerald, "we had a supper, and then Dolby 'came out.' I could see that he amused Boz by his rough manner of speech. He was assiduous in gathering up local stories, incidents, etc., to amuse 'the Chief,' as he invariably called him, and these the Chief seriously inclined to hear. Nay, after supper, as Boz reclined on the sofa, Dolby went through various gymnastics, notably the feat of standing on his head on a chair, in which he was not very successful; but the eager Boz was piqued into competing, all wearied as he was, and thought he would show him how to do it—and he actually did!" A better-known example of Dolby's humorous endeavours is the story of the "Great International Walking Match" between himself and James Osgood, which took place in freezing weather at Boston.

In Dolby's company Dickens was completely at ease, for Dolby was equal to his every mood. When Dickens was in low spirits, Dolby could cheer him; when Dickens was in high spirits, Dolby was ready for any frolic which Dickens might suggest.

In the interludes between their journeys away from home, Dolby saw Dickens regularly. Almost every Thursday Dolby met Dickens at the office of *All the Year Round*. "As often as he was in town," said Dolby, "I was his constant companion, and many a pleasant little dinner we discussed together, at the Blue Posts in Cork Street, and elsewhere; and many a happy night we spent at the establishment, or at a theatre." Dolby was also a frequent visitor to Gad's Hill.

On one occasion Dolby had the pleasure of Dickens's company at his own home, near Ross. Dickens gave a Shetland pony to Dolby's daughter and stood sponsor to his son (George Charles), who was born when they were in America.

But Dickens's health became dangerously bad; the provincial readings were abandoned and the London series came to an end, at the St. James's Hall, on March 15th, 1870. On June the 9th, Dickens died.

Upon hearing the news of his death, Dolby immediately hastened to Gad's Hill, where he was kindly received by Mamie and Georgina. He was asked if he would like to see the body of his old chief, but he could not bear to do so. "I wanted to think of him," he wrote, "as I had seen him last. I went away from the house, and out on to the Rochester road. It was a bright morning in June, one of the days he had loved; on such a day we had trodden that road together many and many a time. But never again, we two, along that white and dusty way, with the flowering hedges over against us, and the sweet bare sky and the sun above us. We had taken our last walk together."

After the death of Dickens we lose sight of Dolby. His splendid record as Dickens's manager should have been an asset to him, and no doubt it was. We know that two years later he was in America again, but apart from this we know little. At some point, and for reasons unknown, his prosperity declined. "After the death of Dickens," said Fitzgerald, "I used occasionally to encounter Dolby, who began to fall on evil days. He had made a good connection and was brother of the cantatrice, but somehow he did not get forward. I noticed the growing shabbiness."

According to Ralph Straus, Dolby died in poverty, brought on by over-indulgence in drink. If Straus is correct (and he cites no authority), it is perhaps not surprising that Dolby's biography has been neglected. It is true that he died in poverty. This we know from a footnote to F. G. Kitton's biography of Dickens: "George Dolby died in October 1900, at the Fulham Infirmary, the fact of his utterly destitute condition being quite unknown to his artist-son in Paris."

"Poor Dolby!" said Fitzgerald. "Had I known of his last straits, I should have been glad indeed to have helped him."

## II

Fifteen years before his death, Dolby had recorded his memories of Dickens in *Charles Dickens as I knew him*. This book was published by T. Fisher Unwin in 1885. It was noticed at length by the weekly reviews and, on the whole, with favour. *The Saturday Review* made the reservation that there was "an excess of trivial detail" and said that it was a book to be skimmed rather than to be read. *The Athenaeum* was more generous: "Mr. Dolby writes of 'the Chief,' as he calls him, with a sincerity of affection and admiration which is touching in the extreme."

If Dolby had hoped for a profitable return from his literary labours, he must have been disappointed. The first edition was published at six shillings. A "Popular Edition" was published the following year at three shillings and sixpence. (This, I suspect,

was the first edition "remaindered.") The total sales in Dolby's lifetime were probably less than ten thousand, and his royalties round about £200.<sup>1</sup> The third (and last) edition was published in 1912, on the occasion of the centenary of Dickens's birth, by Everett & Co., at the modest price of two shillings. This useful edition, which is now hard to find, has an index, which the book certainly needs, and fourteen illustrations. There is a short preface signed "O.S.", from which we may deduce that the editor was B. W. Matz, editor of *The Dickensian*, who occasionally used the pseudonym "O. Sack."

Unfortunately, Dolby's recollections of Dickens have been eclipsed by Forster's massive biography, even as Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes of the late Samuel Johnson* have been eclipsed by Boswell's great "Life." All latter-day biographers of Dickens are greatly indebted to Dolby's narrative, whose reliability has never been questioned, but so little is it generally known or esteemed that it has been allowed to remain out-of-print for many years, and the copies which survive in public libraries are seldom read.

In his preface Dolby wrote: "I am far from the affectation of claiming for my book that it should rank as an artistic production." But it is, in fact, remarkably well written and greatly superior to the rambling volumes of Percy Fitzgerald. As the *Saturday Review* observed, "Mr. Dolby rather needlessly apologises to his readers for its lack of 'the flavour and essence of a genuine literary work'."

In one respect Dolby is superior even to Forster. Forster's *Life of Charles Dickens*, with all its merits, is a typically Victorian biography; it is dignified, detached and (save only when Dickens himself intervenes) solemn. Both Dolby and Forster are discreet about Dickens's private affairs, which have received so much attention of late. They could not be otherwise. But Dolby's is a much less formal portrait. In his pages we often see Dickens when he was, so to speak, "off-stage."

Dolby has woven into his narrative, with great skill, a number of striking anecdotes of Dickens. Some of these are now familiar through constant quotation, although they have not always been quoted, as they deserve to be, in Dolby's own words. Sometimes Dolby records snatches of conversation between himself and Dickens. I like particularly the following example, which concerns a fire which broke out at their New York hotel:

I found him [Dickens] on the point of getting into bed.

"What do you want?" he enquired.

"The hotel's on fire."

"I know it," he said.

"How do you know it?"

"I can smell it," he said. "What are you going to do about it?"

"I don't know," I replied . . .

A most extraordinary anecdote, too well-known to be repeated here, is the story of how Dickens, supported by Dolby and Wills, played the clown, in the broad light of day, in a street in or near

<sup>1</sup> Dolby may have had difficulty in finding a publisher, as he solicited the aid of Fitzgerald in finding one. "I gave him a letter or two," said Fitzgerald.

Portsmouth. No one, I believe, has ever doubted this story, although Dolby, alone, is the authority for it. However, perhaps it is significant that this wild exploit took place in Dolby's company. It is the kind of lark which would have appealed to his broad sense of humour.

We are indebted to Dolby, also, for the record of an episode which was dramatic in a far different sense. I refer to the quarrel which took place between Dickens and Dolby over the murder scene from *Oliver Twist*, which Dickens had "worked up" into a reading of spell-binding horror. Dolby had been firmly against this reading from the beginning. He knew full well the effect it would have on Dickens's shattered constitution. But Dickens had set his heart on this reading and could not be persuaded to abandon it. "The horrible perfection to which he brought it," said Dolby, "and its novelty, acted as a charm to him and made him the more determined to go on with it come what might . . ." The frequency with which Dickens persisted in giving this reading was a source of great anxiety to Dolby and one evening, over supper, when they were discussing the programme for the weeks ahead, he ventured to remark that out of four readings a week Dickens had put down three "Murders," that full houses were assured whether this reading were given or not, and that Dickens was therefore under no necessity to tear himself to pieces three times a week. Dickens's reaction to this mild remonstrance is thus recorded by Dolby:

"Have you finished?" he said, angrily.

"I have said all I feel on that matter," was my reply.

Bounding up from his chair, and throwing his knife and fork on his plate (which he smashed to atoms), he exclaimed—"Dolby! your infernal caution will be your ruin one of these days!"

I left the table, and proceeded to put my tour list in my writing-case. Turning round, I saw he was crying (my eyes were not so clear as they might be), and coming towards me, he embraced me affectionately, sobbing the while—

"Forgive me, Dolby! I really didn't mean it; and I know you are right. We will talk the matter over calmly in the morning."

This incident has probably lost nothing in the telling. The words in parenthesis—"which he smashed to atoms"—fix it forever in the mind.

In these and in many other anecdotes, Dickens comes vividly to life. Thus, there is Dickens dancing a hornpipe in a railway carriage, with Dolby and Wills improvising the accompaniment; Dickens entertaining Dolby with the drinking song from *Der Freischütz*; Dickens at the circus, frigidly ignoring the stupid puns on his name with which the clown directs the attention of the audience to his presence; Dickens in the draughty sitting-room of a hotel, sitting on the hearthrug before the fire, with Dolby's Turkish fez on his head and a coloured muffler round his neck; Dickens back-stage at a New York theatre, considerably surprised by the shortness of the ballet skirts, and measuring the skirt of the *première danseuse* with his dress glove; Dickens ex-

plaining his method for preparing an important speech; Dickens calculating the number of shocks the nerves received in the course of a journey by express train from London to Edinburgh; Dickens gently teasing guests at Gad's Hill, who had been making merry all night in the billiards room, by asking them if they had "slept well"; and Dickens arrayed in court-dress, affecting mock dismay at being unable to decide whether the hat should be worn "fore and aft" or "th'wart ships!"

A careful reading of Dolby's text is rewarding, for he mentions casually several of Dickens's characteristics which are worthy of note. For example, we learn that he was fond of theatrical gossip; that he not only re-arranged the furniture in a hotel suite to his satisfaction, but also had a method of "putting the house in order" when he was travelling in a railway carriage; and that when taking leave of his intimate friends he never used the word "Good-bye."

It is interesting to note, also, that the only good photograph of Dickens (in Dolby's opinion) is the one which was taken by Ben Gurney in New York, in 1868.

I have already mentioned that Dolby was a frequent visitor to Gad's Hill. His detailed description of the house, and the routine of the household, is one of the best things in his book. The following brief extracts give some idea of its interest:

A peculiarity of the household was the fact that, except at table, no servant was ever seen about . . .

There was no specified time for the guests to be at breakfast, that meal being on the table from nine to ten, or half-past . . .

The dinners were like everything else in the house—superlatively good, with a *menu* calculated to baffle the criticism of the most epicurean, and the conversation, under the generalship of such a host, never flagging for a moment . . .

It was his [Dickens's] invariable habit to retire to bed at midnight—but without imposing any condition upon his guests, that they should follow his example . . .

More than half of the book is devoted to the American tour. For almost all the time that he was in America, Dickens was in poor health. After reading Dolby's account of Dickens's activities and sufferings during these months, we may well wonder that the programme was ever fulfilled. Although cheerfulness did break in, and there were occasional high jinks, on the whole this was a wearisome tour. The saddest episode was the journey from Boston to New York which took place on Christmas Day. Dickens was "suffering from the most acute depression, consequent, in a great measure, on the return of the influenza, and the necessity of having to leave Boston and to travel on such a day . . . Never before or since had we experienced so gloomy a journey, and we were delighted to find ourselves once more in New York. Very little was said about Christmas, the only reference to it being made by Mr. Dickens in proposing the health of all our dear ones at home . . ." A most un-Dickensian Christmas!

The account of the final tour, in this country, is a harrowing document. With the intrusion of the murder scene from *Oliver Twist*, Dickens's entertainment had taken a sinister turn. The

laughter of the audience was as loud as ever, but besides the laughter there was spine-chilling horror, which froze the people to their seats. Behind the scenes there was no laughter at all. The days of high jinks had gone. Dickens's marvellous constitution was breaking at last, and it became increasingly obvious that he was endangering his life. There came a day, at Preston, when his medical adviser warned him that any further exertion would be fatal. Having accepted this unwelcome verdict, Dickens's first thought was for Dolby. As the Preston reading was due in a few hours, and all the tickets had been sold, well might Dickens ask: "But how will Dolby get through?" "In catering for the public amusement," said Dolby, in recalling this crisis, "the difficulty of obtaining a large paying audience is well known, and it falls to the lot of few managers to dismiss their public at two hours' notice, with every ticket sold." But Dolby "got through." He always did. For he was a remarkable man and well deserved Dickens's love and esteem. If he was rough, it was only in the sense that he was a rough diamond.

Not the least of Dolby's achievements, certainly, was the book in which he recorded his memories of Dickens. "I have trusted for the most part," he said, "to a good memory and a copious store of notes." In taking leave of his book, we may wonder what happened to the "copious store of notes." Presumably they included Dickens's letters to Dolby.

### III.

Altogether, Dickens gave 423 professional readings. Of these, 242 were given under Dolby's management and they brought Dickens nearly £33,000 profit. "Handsome as these results were," said Dolby, "and of course highly satisfactory to Mr. Dickens, they were purchased at the dear cost of the sacrifice of his health." This is the truth. There may be some, therefore, who will look upon Dolby as Dickens's evil genius, for had he not undertaken the management of the readings, or if he had been in any degree less competent than he was, then either the readings would never have been resumed, or they would have been abandoned much sooner.

But this judgment on Dolby would be grossly unfair. Soon after Messrs. Chappell had made their first approach to Dickens, offering Dolby as manager, Dickens wrote to them saying that he hoped Dolby was "a man of resources." Dolby was indeed a man of resources. His energy was astonishing. It is worth mentioning, at this point, that he was not exclusively devoted to Dickens's interests during the period 1866-1870. For example, on the eve of the American tour he was occupied "in several other matters in connection with catering for the amusement of the public." But we may well suppose that none of his other commissions gave him so much satisfaction, or more enduring memories.

Dickens and Dolby . . . a great partnership in the history of public entertainment. For the greater partner, death in the full tide of public affection, burial in the Abbey and immortal fame. For the lesser partner, declining fortunes and a pauper's death

in an infirmary ward; not altogether forgotten, but the most undeservedly neglected of all members of the "Dickens's Circle." How often, in the misery of his latter days, must he have recalled those marvellous years when he was the adviser, confidant and friend of one of the greatest and most beloved men this world has ever known. "His death," said Dolby, "closed the brightest chapter of my life." This we may well believe.

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I would be grateful for any further biographical information on George Dolby, c/o The Editor.—J.G.O.

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## DICKENS'S METHOD OF CHARACTERISATION

By EUGENE GOODHEART

**I**NSUFFERABLE and incredible as some of Dickens's "good" characters are, they cannot be dismissed simply as artistic aberrations. The recurrence of these characters in the novels and the intensity with which Dickens presents them suggest that their creation springs from some deep urgency in his imagination. It is, indeed, paradoxical that an artist of Dickens's supreme satiric gifts should yield to the maudlin sentiment of Esther Summerson and little Dorrit, I think, however, that the paradox is only apparent, that between the satiric portraits of Podsnap, Uriah Heep and Silas Wegg, on the one hand, and the more "sympathetic" portraits of Esther Summerson, little Dorrit and Jenny Wren, on the other hand, there exists a real affinity.

In both cases there is apparent distortion. If Uriah Heep is a monster of villainy, Esther Summerson is a monster of virtue. What seems a fragment in the personalities of most people tends to define the whole personality in a Dickens character. Santayana assures us that Dickens does not really distort. Only if we accept people at their diplomatic value can we think of them as rounded and many-sided. Actually, most human beings tend to be dominated by a single trait or passion. We are all obsessed without knowing it, and Dickens, having seen this with perverse clarity, is perpetually reminding us of it. The exceptions are rare: the good gentlemen of the novels, Clenham and Wrayburn, for instance. (And even Wrayburn, in his ennui, has a slight trace of the general Dickensian malaise.) I think Santayana is right in his sense of Dickens. Dickens's characters are not fictions; we cannot deny them verisimilitude. But there is still a moral problem, that is, in Dickens's relation to his people. Dickens is not merely performing an act of satire, he is also performing an act of love. Since he tends to conceive almost all of the people of his world (the virtuous as well as the villainous) as obsessed, then the obsession itself cannot be penetrated by the thrust of satire. It becomes an element or idiosyncrasy of Dickens's art like the language he uses. The act of characterisation ceases to be a moral

act, i.e., a form of judgement. When he prefers one character to another, he is only choosing between obsessions, and the fact of obsession does not seem to disturb his moral sensitivities. As a result Dickens's portraits of virtue are as grotesque as his portraits of villainy—and more disturbing to the reader.

It sometimes seems as though Dickens were deliberately testing himself and his reader, testing, that is, his capacity for sympathy. Dickens may be saying: "Here is a woman (Esther Summerson or little Dorrit), ugly, deformed by disease. She is not remarkable for her intelligence. Her emotional range is limited to a cloying humility and pity. Most unattractive! Let us see the extent of your compassion. For after all, she is *good*." Dickens strains our capacity for sympathy almost to the breaking point. If art, as the Romantics suggested, is an exercise of the moral imagination, then it would be extremely unimaginative of us to be repelled by Esther's emaciated appearance or Dorrit's littleness or Jenny's deformity. Our minds must dwell rather on Esther's goodness, on little Dorrit's kindness, on Jenny's golden hair and beautiful eyes!

But this is an insidious appeal, simply because the artist himself cannot keep from dwelling on the deformities. How are we to sympathize with little Dorrit's plight if after she and her family have got their freedom and become rich, she longs for the accustomed haunts of Marshalsea Prison? There is nothing wrong with Dickens's psychology here. What is wrong is the inordinate sympathy which Dickens gives to little Dorrit. What is doubly wrong is that she is made the good angel of the novel. Unlike Shaw, who regarded poverty as the worst of crimes (the burden of which is equally shared by the exploiter and the exploited), Dickens's imagination seems most comfortable, indeed almost joyous, in the haunts of poverty. The comfort that little Dorrit finds in prison is a silent encouragement to the conditions that breed the vices to which she is symbolically opposed. What we have is a characteristic dilemma of the Christian imagination. In the excess of its guilt, it compounds the guilt by refusing to be free of it. To enjoy one's riches is perhaps to forget their basis in exploitation, i.e., in man's inhumanity to man, but not to enjoy one's riches is to perpetuate the feeling for poverty which makes exploitation possible. The Christian, trapped by his guilt, begins to find an unspeakable pleasure in a mutilating poverty or grotesquerie of spirit.

The good gentleman of Dickens's novels (e.g., Clenham or Wrayburn) is of a somewhat different order of being from the oddities with whom he deals. There are even moments in the novels when he functions as a kind of *raisonneur* in a world of obsessed people. (This happens frequently with Eugene Wrayburn in *Our Mutual Friend*.) But the disparity between the gentleman and the oddity is not very great. Indeed, so deeply is the gentleman, even the most recalcitrant gentleman, engaged by the crazy world that he becomes a part of it. So that the detachment of satire becomes impossible to Wrayburn. Indeed, Wrayburn's growth into responsibility and maturity consists in his final realisation that he must take the world seriously.

One picture I have of Dickens is that of a most attractive man, an aristocrat by temperament who, because of his social position and his psychic aberrations, is drawn to images of helplessness, poverty and deformity. Dickens's sympathy for down-trodden humanity becomes a passion. As if to atone for a deep sense of guilt, he must surrender himself completely to some mutilated image of suffering.

In a characteristically forthright essay George Orwell refutes the popular view of Dickens as a radical or proletarian writer. It is scarcely necessary for me to rehearse Orwell's proof that Dickens is really a middle class writer. Needless to say, his documentation is formidable. I would only extend Orwell's argument a little. In the work of a radical writer, the dominant note is indignation or fury. Poverty degrades its victims, but the source of poverty being elsewhere, i.e., in the camp of the enemy, the indignation is pure and righteous. The radical writer explicitly or implicitly demands for the poor what rightfully belongs to them. Dickens's view is somewhat different. The main drama of *Little Dorrit*, for instance, is Clenham's expiation of his guilt, his sense of guilt being based on the somewhat mistaken belief that his family's financial prosperity grew out of the misery of the Dorrits. The centre of the novel is the exploiter Clenham, not the exploited Dorrit. (And the dispossessed Dorrit must be carefully distinguished from the classically exploited proletarian. The Clenham-Dorrit relation has very little to do with the Marxian capitalist-proletarian relation.) The genuine indignation of the novel is tainted with Clenham's guilt. And little Dorrit, a child of poverty in spite of the quality of her father, is also subject to the distortions of a guilt-ridden imagination. She makes no demands on life.

And this is good according to Dickens's view of the world, for the moral consequences of "go-getting", of seizing the chance for happiness (as dramatised by Fanny Dorrit) are clear.<sup>1</sup> Salvation in Dickens's world comes only through a rigorous self-denial. The guilt must be atoned for, a guilt as essential to the imagination of the novels as the hilarious pandemonium that riots through them.

<sup>1</sup> In this connection, see Lionel Trilling's interesting essay on *Little Dorrit* in his book of essays *The Opposing Self*. He gives a more sympathetic interpretation of the morality of the novel.

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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### JIP

SIR,

Mr. Frank A. Gibson is surely mistaken in referring to Jip (*The Dickensian*, Sept. 1957) as "Dora's peke." The Pekinese were not introduced into England until 1860, the first batch being imported in that year after the sack of the Summer Palace at Peking. One of them, subsequently called "Lootie", was presented by General Dunne to Queen Victoria. Mr. Gibson also quotes the passage in which Dora pats Jip "on the bridge of his blunt nose." A Peke's nose has no bridge. Perhaps Jip was a King Charles spaniel.

Newton Abbott, Devon.

M. Murdock.

# THE THEATRICAL TERNANS

By MALCOLM MORLEY

## PART I

IN the eighteenth century theatres the prompter was an important person, not an assistant to the assistant stage manager as is often the case to-day when a young person, after a course at a drama school, joins a repertory company and is given the job of holding the book—and called prompter. No, indeed, the prompter of old was king pin in a theatre. His office was akin to that of the present-day stage director and, with the constant change of bill, he had a few more duties to perform. He was a power only less than the famous stars who visited the theatre, or the resident leading man should the latter also be stage manager, as was generally the case. There was not much of the playhouse roost the prompter did not rule.

During the last decade of the 1700's, John Jarman was prompter at the Theatre Royal, York. He had been appointed by Tate Wilkinson, the lovable, if eccentric, owner of the playhouse. As elsewhere, the circuit system prevailed at York and Wilkinson's company visited, among other places, Hull, Wakefield and Pontefract. When the season ended at York, the players proceeded to Hull, then to the next town and so on until the time came to return to York for another season. The choice of prompter was a happy one. Jarman, who at one time had been connected with the law, lived up to his many responsibilities and shouldered a large share of the theatrical burden for Tate. He married Maria Mottershed whose mother, Mrs. Errington, is mentioned as having been an actress of repute. It was the mother, no doubt, who gave the young wife the private rehearsals preliminary to a hearing by Wilkinson. His book, *The Wandering Patentee*, tells how Mrs. Jarman read some passages to him from Juliet and in his own words "She brought forth notes not only pleasing and plaintive but rather uncommon for a young beginner." When the novice actress made her debut in the part on the York stage he wrote "Mrs. Jarman never displeases, and if she improves as much the ensuing two years, as she has the last, why Mrs. Jarman need not fear, with health, a welcome on any stage, provided she will drop her intimacy with Mr. Monotony." /

Perhaps that note of monotony in her delivery stood in the way of Mrs. Jarman reaching a top place in her profession. But there is no question she ranked high with Wilkinson. There is a story of a performance of *Richard III* at York where she had become an established favourite. Early in the performance Mrs. Jarman who played the Queen was taken suddenly ill and could not continue. Her husband being prompter had, somehow or other, to meet the emergency. Tate was enjoying a prolonged sleep in his room near the stage. It was his usual custom and nobody dare disturb him. Mrs. Wood, an obscure actress, offered herself as a substitute and so proceeded with the play to the great relief of Jarman. All went well until the sleeping Wilkinson was awakened by the agonised tones of the new Queen in the

scene where her two children are dragged from her. Slowly hobbling round the back of the stage he reached the prompter and stood watching the actress as she pumped out her wrongs. It was too much for the old manager. Taking Jarman by the arm he led him to the first entrance, then, pointing significantly to Mrs. Wood, he looked to him for an explanation. The poor prompter tried to explain that his wife was ill and Mrs. Wood had kindly offered to act the rôle. Tate was speechless; words were not enough. He pulled off his hat, and with it his wig. Hurling them both on the stage at the feet of the Queen he uttered his well-known "U——gh!" and, trotting across the back of the scene, retired to his room and double-locked the door.

The Jarmans had six children. The eldest, born in Hull in February, 1803, was called Fanny, her actual baptismal names being Frances Eleanor. She was to acquire considerable reputation as an actress both at home and abroad. Another daughter, Louisa, was spoken of as a promising singer.

In 1814 Mrs. Jarman moved to Bath and was enlisted as a member of the company at the theatre there. But she no longer played leading rôles. Her part in *Romeo and Juliet* was the Nurse which she acted to the Romeo of William Macready that year. After the demise of her husband, Mrs. Jarman lost interest in her own stage career and gave herself to fostering the marked talent of Fanny. The little girl recited Southey's poem, "Mary, the Maid of the Inn," on the occasion of her mother's benefit early in 1815. On May 23rd that year she played her first part, Edward, in *Everyone has his Fault*. A run of juvenile rôles followed; the theatre kept her constantly busy. One of her parts was Bellario in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Philaster* of which the clerical Genest wrote "She acted very prettily, but the part was rather too much for her—she has played several small parts, but is still very young."

Incessant work and study seem to have undermined Fanny's health and she was forced to take a long rest. After a convalescent spell on the coast of Sussex she returned to Bath, now a fully fledged actress entrusted with important characters. From Bath Fanny went to Dublin, opening there on October 20th, 1822, as Letitia Hardy in *The Belle's Stratagem*. Dublin was a city to which she became greatly attached. The young actress was to return many times and made the place as much her home as any place could be to a player continually touring. Maybe it was at this time she first met the handsome and attractive, Dublin born, Thomas Lawless Ternan whose forbears, he proudly acclaimed, were the renowned O'Tiernans. At the age of eighteen he had gone on the stage joining the Kent Circuit under the management of the redoubtable Dowton. Later he returned to his native city as leading tragedian.

Fanny Jarman's star was in the ascendant. She was in demand. Greeted with enthusiasm in Southampton, Winchester and Birmingham, an engagement followed at Bath where she had made her debut as a child actress eleven years previously. Here she acted Juliet. Her mother, still at the theatre, was still playing the Nurse. London was on the horizon, a Mecca for the ambitious.

The ageing Charles Kemble engaged her for Covent Garden and as Juliet to his Romeo she made her first appearance on February 7th, 1827, before a London audience. Playgoers liked her and the critics acclaimed her, making favourable comparisons with the celebrated Miss O'Neill whom they said she resembled.

For three seasons Miss Jarman remained at the Garden playing a variety of leading rôles; Belvidera in *Venice Preserved*, Mrs. Beverley in *The Gamester*, Perdita and Imogen were among them. Edmund Kean came to the theatre and she acted Portia to his Shylock and Desdemona to his Othello. In the summer months, between seasons, Fanny starred in the Provinces. She was to visit Exeter in July 1828 where one of her characters was Mrs. Haller in the lugubrious play of *The Stranger*. In an article in the *Times Literary Supplement* (January 27th, 1956), Morehard Bishop has advanced the theory that Miss Jarman was the original of Emily Fotheringay in Thackeray's *Pendennis*. His arguments are interesting and reasonably convincing. At the impressionable age of seventeen Thackeray had lived in the West Country and was there at the time the actress visited Exeter. It is not impossible that he might have been one of the audience when *the Jarman* acted Mrs. Haller. In the novel, written years later, the youthful Pendennis and his friend Harry Foker attend a performance where *the Fotheringay* acted Mrs. Haller. And the boy's glowing description of the actress might well have been a treasured memory by the novelist of Fanny Jarman.

On the occasion of her Benefit on June 10th, 1829, at Covent Garden, Fanny played Amadis in *The Nymph of the Grotto*, by W. Dimond. Her sister Louisa was seen as Eglantine, a part previously taken by Madame Vestris but which that reigning comedienne resigned when she found Fanny obtained more applause as Amadis. Kemble was having his managerial troubles—both with actress and with finance. The Garden had been losing money continuously and bankruptcy stared him in the face. He was seeking a way to prevent such a happening. The theatre closed for the summer of 1829 and Fanny understood from him that she was to be re-engaged when it opened in October. The weeks went by but Kemble held back. His excuse for being indefinite was expressed as a grievance. Mrs. Jarman, who attended to business for Fanny, had sent back the part of Oriana in *The Inconstant*, saying that if her daughter played in Farquhar's comedy it must be as Bizarre, a smaller but more effective rôle. Actually Kemble was keeping Fanny in reserve should another Fanny, one in whom he was more interested, fail. The other Fanny was his own daughter who was to make a first appearance on the stage in the autumn. Another Juliet was in the field for such was the rôle selected for the girl's debut at Covent Garden. The result is well known in stage history. Fanny Kemble was an immediate success. Her father was freed from debt and Covent Garden saved—for the time being.

Fanny Jarman, having waited in vain to hear from Kemble, accepted an offer to join the company in Edinburgh. The centres away from London were more dependable in their allegiance. Glasgow, Bath, Liverpool and other cities welcomed her. In 1831

she was back in Edinburgh where a leading tragedian from Newcastle had been engaged, T. L. Ternan. He was 32 and she 28; romance was in the air. They acted together in play after play; both were popular with the public. On November 9th, 1832, a Masque, *The Vision of the Bard*, written by Sheridan Knowles in honour of Walter Scott, was given with Ternan as the Bard and Fanny as Scotia.

Macready, a visiting star, came to Edinburgh the next year and in his revealing diary noted on April 3rd, 1833, "Spoke very kindly to Mr. Ternan, last night's *Othello*, on some bad habits and on his merits." Fanny was in London where prospects were encouraging. The Coburg Theatre in the Waterloo Road had been taken over by two actors from Covent Garden, William Abbott and Daniel Egerton. They had renamed it the Royal Victoria in honour of the little Princess, the Queen to be. It was a young Vic then; to-day it is the Old Vic. The new managers had redecorated the house and were engaging the best available players. Fanny was among them and happy to find James Warde, a friend of her childhood in Bath, also one of the company. The first piece on the bill of the opening night, July 1st, 1833, was *The Forest of Ardenne*s after which came Douglas Jerrold's nautical drama, *Black-Eyed Susan* with Fanny in the name part and T. P. Cooke as William. Two weeks later was produced *The King's Fool*, the first English adaptation of Victor Hugo's *Le Roi s'Amuse*, a work upon which the libretto of Verdi's opera *Rigoletto* was later to be based. At the Victoria, Triboulet was played by Warde and Blanche by Fanny. For over a year Miss Jarman alternated between the theatre and making starring excursions into the country. At the Vic. she acted more than a score of leading rôles including Jane Shore, Mary Queen of Scots, Jeannie Deans, Nell Gwynne, Kate Hardcastle, Lady Teazle and Bess in Sheridan Knowles' *The Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green*.

Meanwhile, Ternan had left Edinburgh and gone to Dublin. Here Macready in his travels encountered him again and confided in his diary on March 8th, 1834: "Went to rehearsal. I do not like Mr. Ternan's mode of behaviour: it is difficult to say who will or will not be an actor, but I do not think this person in his private capacity will ever shed lustre on the theatrical profession. He seems to me opinionated, jealous and of course little-minded. Rested myself and read a little of *Werner*, which for my own particular sake, and to bear down the nasty little attempts to detract from my effect in Mr. Ternan, I wished to act well. I think I did play the greater part of it very well. I was collected, and had my energies at my command. Mr. Ternan, without the shade of an excuse, tried to disconcert me, but I punished him by playing my best, and was satisfied with the effect produced. I do not like him—he should associate with Mr. Vandenhoff, a man who merits, what only baseness can deserve—contempt." Macready, himself, had the reputation of being difficult and Ternan was not easy it would appear.

The Irish tragedian went to London seeking a position at Drury Lane or Covent Garden, the legitimate theatres of the metropolis. It was a blank quest. He only met with unfulfilled promises. His

tempestuous soul was in rebellion. Thomas talked to Fanny of pastures new, of the United States and the Canadas where actors of his ability were appreciated. Would she go overseas with him? She would. On September 21st, 1834, they were married and the following day set sail from London for America.

Husband and wife duly reached the promised continent. An engagement was waiting them and they opened in Philadelphia at the Chestnut Street Theatre in November. They were well received. His Richard III was approved and her Juliet admired. Anticipating similar laudation they proceeded to New York where the two were seen in *Romeo and Juliet* at the Park Theatre on December 17th, 1834; their one and only appearance in the city. It was a decidedly different reception from the previous one. Playgoers of Gotham were offended because the Ternans had chosen to make their American debut in Philadelphia, a decision which was regarded as a slight to the importance of New York. Comment extended to Ternan's bald head. No attempt had been made to cover this. Were wigs hard to come by in the city or was a hairless Romeo an innovation of his own?

In January the Ternans were in Boston where things were better. Though Thomas was esteemed as an actor, it was Fanny who was the favourite. A critic described her as tall and commanding with a voice of much sweetness and power. The slight lisp, something she never quite lost, in no way detracted from her performance. Husband and wife played to good audiences and were to return to Boston a number of times.

The journeys between the seaboard towns of America were mostly made by paddle steamers and it was whilst travelling on one to Philadelphia up Delaware Bay, during a stormy voyage, that the first of their three daughters was born on August 17th, 1835. Like her mother she was christened Frances Eleanor and, like her mother, was to be called Fanny. A few weeks after the birth of the little girl, Mrs. Ternan was playing Violanthe in *The Wonder* at the Chesnut Street Theatre.

That autumn the Ternans went south visiting New Orleans and Mobile. Early in 1836 they were in Pittsburgh and in the summer that year they journeyed north to Quebec and Montreal.

In the last mentioned city the Ternans acted for four months in the very theatre where six years later Charles Dickens was to indulge his histrionics. From Montreal the pair went to Washington and other places in the east. Acclaimed nearly everywhere else the itinerant stars felt no inclination to risk New York again.

Distances were great and travelling in those days was very much of an ordeal. Railways were only just being developed and between the towns where they played hundreds of miles had to be traversed by boat, stage-coach or whatever way possible. During their nomadic life, up and down the continent, the family had increased and now another child was expected. Thomas was restless and disgruntled. His failure in New York preyed on his mind and he resented being overshadowed by his wife. She wanted to be back in the old country for the coming event, a reason that largely influenced their decision to return. They were

once more playing in Philadelphia, this time at the Walnut Street Theatre. A Farewell Benefit was given for Fanny on December 11th, 1836, the bill being Talfourd's tragedy of *Ion* and an adapta-



Maria Ternan

Ellen Ternan

Fanny Ternan

Courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum

tion from Scott, *The Heart of Midlothian*. It was the last appearance of the Ternans in America. Soon after the New Year they reached the United Kingdom in time for the advent of a second daughter, Maria. The third and youngest, Ellen, was to be born in England on March 3rd, 1839.

(To be continued)

## OPERAS FROM DICKENS

To the list of operas from Dickens in the Autumn Number should be added *The Cricket on the Hearth*, which was first produced at the Opera House, Vienna, March 21st, 1896. The music was by Karl Goldmark, a considerable musician, and the libretto by A. M. Willner. It was given in Berlin on June 27th, of the same year. The opera had a measure of success on the Continent and was sung in several other cities. An English version by Percy Pinkerton was produced at the Brixton Theatre, London, on November 23rd, 1900. It was heard in New York in 1910.—Malcom Morley.

## THE DICKENS HOUSE

The numbers of visitors to the Dickens House continue to mount year by year and in 1957 there was a further increase of over 600 on the previous year, making a record number of 6380.

# SERMON BY THE REV. C. F. V. BOWKETT AT THE DICKENS COMMEMORATION SERVICE

Southwark Cathedral, June 30th, 1957

"The good that I would, I do not. The evil which I would not, that I do . . . O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?"—Rom. 7, 19 and 24.

St. Paul's letter to the Christians at Rome. It seemed fitting to me, as Rector of one of the Churches Charles Dickens knew so well, that I should base what I have to say on that book whose story circles largely around my Church, whose heroine was baptised and married there and where, in time of need, she found shelter and comfort. Fittingly, that Church has come to be known as Little Dorrit's Church, sometimes, I regret, to the exclusion of its greater fame and place in history won long before Charles Dickens was born. It was the parish Church of the Borough some hundreds of years before this venerable building became a parish Church at the Reformation.

So well and vividly did Dickens record what befell Little Dorrit that at times it is almost impossible for me to persuade visitors that the entry of her baptism, and the record of her marriage, are not to be found in the registers of my Church. One American visitor thought I was quite mistaken especially when she was able to point out that Dickens described the East Window which can still be seen.

I am afraid that I made confusion worse confounded when I tried carefully to explain that the window, though containing the same subject matter, was quite new, in fact placed there as recently as 1952, I shewed her also a letter from Charles Dickens which acknowledged that even the window he described was not in place at the time of his story. Sadly, however, I must confess she departed from St. George's quite unconvinced! Thinking no doubt that I was a most unworthy guardian of Little Dorrit's Church.

This, of course, is a wonderful tribute to the way in which Dickens told his story, so alive, that his readers are convinced that the characters he created did live and walk the streets of Southwark.

And is not that the reason why his writings to-day are so dear to us all. They are indeed alive. They bring back to us a forgotten generation and we are able to live with them in the world as they knew it and experienced it and our lives are the more full for being enabled to share, though for a space, in their way and manner of life. His writings help us to understand from the human angle the events of social history in different areas of our land. To appreciate the manner and mode of life of those who have passed on to us a goodly heritage. To respect and honour them for the standards maintained and the things accomplished under conditions which to us to-day would appear, if not hopeless, then at least so difficult as to dishearten even the most resolute spirit.

To return to Little Dorrit. As you remember it now, what I wonder is the thing which stands out in your memory as that

which impressed you most? No doubt the character of Dorrit herself. Patient in rebuke, cheerful in adversity, humble in sorrow, simple in faith, understanding to others, sympathetic to sufferers, loyal to relatives and friends, loving, kind and unspoilt in prosperity.

To-day, such an one would be in great danger of the description "spineless," unless we were great enough ourselves to discern the fuller greatness of character which rose above the storms and stresses of life and possessed that equanimity based upon the great virtues of faith and love.

To enhance the picture he desired to paint, Dickens used such artifice that he has been accused of an obsession in this story with prisons and imprisonment.

Where he could not imprison characters for fraud or debt he imprisoned them by infirmity, poverty, hopeless ambition or sinful desire. The whole picture he paints is that of imprisonment. Imprisonment so meaningless, so purposeless that to struggle against it, to complain or rebel, was like battling against blind senseless fate, which achieved its end by a gradual suffocation of all living things which come within its reach—hence Dickens's creation of the circumlocution office. In his preface of 1857 he called it a preposterous fancy but suggests that a bad design may sometimes claim to be a good and expressly religious design. With this clue I wondered if this indeed was the key to Little Dorrit.

Was there something about this story which the author wished those who read deeply enough to find? Was this obsession with imprisonment something so real that it sprang from the spiritual experience of Dickens himself? Read the story again and I am certain that this frustration besetting most of the characters in this book will find an echo, as I believe it did with the author, in your own personal spiritual experience.

Charles Dickens did more than record for us a story of the Marshalsea, he did more than create some characters to walk the streets of Southwark before us, he did more than portray the frustrations that beset men in this life. I suggest that he brought out into the open that deepest of all the secrets of our hearts . . . that spiritual imprisonment which is the experience of each one of us . . . an experience which can best be described in the words of St. Paul which I used for my text, "The good that I would, I do not . . . The evil which I would not, that I do. Oh, wretched man that I am."

Is not that my friends, the most bitter spiritual experience of us all?

Let me put St. Paul's words in modern language. "In my mind I am God's willing servant, but in my own nature I am bound fast, as I say, to the law of sin and of death. It is an agonising situation, and who on earth can set me free from the clutches of my own sinful nature? I thank God there is a way out through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Dickens did not give such an answer directly but he shewed in the life of one whose whole nature was a combination of Christian virtues, Little Dorrit herself, that one could come

through all the frustrations and imprisonments, of which the book is so pathetic a record, unscathed, and even enriched by evil turned to good account.

And nowhere on earth or in heaven is the power to do this save in the Saviour. Lest any should think I read too much into this novel I have singled out for our attention as we commemorate Charles Dickens here to-night in the Southwark he knew so well, let me quote from a letter he wrote to his children in 1849. A letter which I think shows us that this man, this great author, was first and foremost a great Christian.

"Remember it is Christianity to do good always . . . even to those who do evil to us. It is Christianity to love our neighbour as ourself, and to do to all men as we would have them do to us. It is Christianity to be gentle, merciful and forgiving, and to keep those qualities quiet in our hearts, and never make a boast of them, or of our prayers or of our love of God, but always to show that we love him by humbly trying to do right in everything.

If we do this, and remember the life and lessons of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and try to act up to them, we may confidently hope that God will forgive us our sins and mistakes and enable us to live and to die in peace."

And where more did Dickens seek to prove his belief than in *Little Dorrit*? By his story proclaim what Paul proclaimed in his letter to the Christians in Rome: "I thank God there is a way out . . . out of all the frustrations and the evils and the imprisonment which falls to the lot of man through the wiles of the devil and our own selfish sinful nature there is a way out, through Jesus Christ Our Lord."

And if we, from *Little Dorrit*, can learn that lesson, Charles Dickens will not have lived and written in vain.

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## DUMMY BOOKS AT GAD'S HILL PLACE

One of the features of Gad's Hill Place that most attracts visitors are the dummy bookbacks with which Dickens decorated his library door and the surrounding panels. Some, if not all of them, were previously in his study at Tavistock House. A complete list, compiled with the kind assistance of Miss W. Stewart Burt, the present owner of the house, is presented here, as they now appear.

Robert Langton, in his *Childhood and Youth of Charles Dickens*, gives a list, marking with an asterisk those which had been used at Tavistock House, but whether he means titles or the actual bookbacks is not clear. Dickens's instructions to the carpenter at Tavistock House (Nonesuch *Letters*, II, 353 and 359) do not help on this point. The idea was not original. Such dummies were installed at the Athenaeum in 1830, and at the adjoining Travellers' Club about the same time.

### ON THE DOOR

Burke (of Edinburgh) on the Sublime and Beautiful. Vols. I-II.  
Commonplace Book of the Oldest Inhabitant. Vols. I-II.  
Had Shakespeare's Uncle a Singing Face. Vols. I-V.

Was Shakespeare's Father Merry ? Vols. I-VI.  
 Mr. Green's Overland Mail.  
 Phrenology of Italian Organs.  
 Paxton's Bloomers. Vols. I-V.  
 Cats Lives. Vols. I-IX.  
 Teazer's Commentaries.  
 Captain Cook's Life of Savage. Vols. I-II.  
 History of the Middling Ages. Vols. I-VI.  
 Five Minutes in China. Vols. I-III.  
 Hansard's Guide to Refreshing Sleep. Vol. I-XIX.  
 The Wisdom of our Ancestors. Vol. I, Ignorance; Vol. II, Superstition;  
 Vol. III, The Block; Vol. IV, The Stake; Vol. V, The Rack; Vol. VI, Dirt.  
 The Books of Moses and Sons. Vols. I-II.  
 Swallows on Emigration. Vols. I-II.  
 Water Works by Father Mathew.  
 The Quarrelly Review. Vol. III.  
 History of a Short Chancery Suit. Index and Vols. I-VII, Vols. X-XIII,  
 XV-XX.  
 Cockatoo on Perch.  
 The Woods and Forests by Peter the Wild Boy. Vol. III.  
 Shelley's Oysters.  
 The Scotch Fiddle. Burns.  
 The Pleasure of Boredom. A Poem.

#### ON THE SHELVES

Carpenter's Bench of Bishops. Vols. I-II.  
 Captain Parry. Virtues of Cold Tar.  
 Abernethy on the Constitution.  
 Morrison's Pill's Progress. Vols. I-II.  
 Jonah's Account of the Whale.  
 Miss Biffin on Deportment.  
 The Art of Cutting the Teeth.  
 Forty Winks at the Pyramids. Vol. I-II.  
 Orson's Art of Etiquette.  
 Chickweed. Vols. I-II.  
 Groundsel by the Author of Chickweed. Vols. I-II.  
 On the Use of Mercury by the Ancient Poets.  
 The Quarrelly Review. Vols. II and IV.  
 Noah's Arkitecture. Vols. I-II.  
 Butcher's Suetonius.  
 Cribbs Edition of Miller. Vols. I-II..  
 Boyle on the Turnip.  
 General Tom Thumb's Modern Warfare. Vols. I-II.  
 Mag's Diversions. Vols. I-IV.\*  
 Drouets Farming. Vols. I-V.  
 Richardson's Show on Dramatic Literature. Vols. I-XII.  
 Was Shakespeare's Mother Fair. Vols. I-IV.  
 Toot's Universal Letter Writer. Vols. I-II.  
 Growler's Gruffiology. Vols. I-IV.  
 Heavisides Conversation with Nobody. Vols. I-III.  
 Strutts Walk.  
 Socrates on Wedlock.  
 The Gunpowder Magazine. Vols. I-IV.  
 Kants Eminent Humbugs. Vols. I-X.  
 Life and Letters of a Learned Pig. Vols. I-VI.  
 Bowowdom, A Poem.  
 Optics by Hooks and Eyes.  
 The Locomotive Engine explained by Colonel Sibthorp.  
 Acoustics by Cods' Sounds.  
 King Henry VIII's Evidences of Christianity. Vols. I-V.  
 Malthus' Nursery Songs.  
 Treatment of Tape Worm by Tim Bobbin.  
 Catalogue of Statues to the Duke of Wellington. Vols. I-X.  
 Steele, by the Author of The Delphin Oracle.  
 Drowsy's Recollections of Nothing. Vol. I-III.  
 Lady Godiva on the Horse.

## A NEWLY DISCOVERED DICKENS FRAGMENT

By G. SEAWIM

THE discovery of a fragment by Charles Dickens, however small, is not such a common event to-day that it can be passed over with equanimity, and it is therefore with some pleasure that a short, but completely unknown, piece by him, is presented here.

As is well known, Dickens undertook the editorship of *Bentley's Miscellany* upon the foundation of that magazine. Apart from the serial, *Oliver Twist*, he contributed several minor pieces such as "The Public Life of Mr. Tulrumble" and other ephemera, but the tiny fragment now unearthed, although signed by him, has remained unnoticed for over 120 years, despite the assiduity of the research workers.

The piece is taken directly from *Bentley's Miscellany*, Volume I, page 152, for February, 1837, and occupies one page only.

It will be noticed that the first paragraph is actually signed "Ed. B.M." [Dickens]. The three paragraphs which complete the page, while anonymous, bear all the marks of being by the same hand which penned the first and are typically Dickens. It can, I think, safely be assumed that the "Ed. B.M." was responsible for the whole.

Despite efforts to lay bare the meaning of the allusions to the contemporary theatre, the references are so obscure that, so far, success has been elusive.

The financial troubles in the Patent Theatres at that time (Drury Lane and Covent Garden) are well known to all theatrical students, but no success has attended endeavours to unearth the identities of Messrs. "F.T. & O."

It is suggested that they probably refer to the contemporary managers at "The Lane" and "The Garden," who had decided on four shillings, two shillings and one shilling as the prices at that period for the boxes, pits and galleries respectively. This was one of the moves in the war between the large patent theatres and those on the other side of the river. That these managers were in the habit of employing hacks to make translations from current French (and other Continental) successes, including a few small changes in the texts, and presenting them as originals, is well known. There is a reference to this in *Nicholas Nickleby*, in which Crummles makes mention of it.

### THEATRICAL ADVERTISEMENT, EXTRAORDINARY

As we might reasonably be expected to account for the possession of the following document, we beg to state that it was put into our hands by an unknown gentleman, who slipped unseen into our *sanctum*, clothed in a whity-brown suit, half-boots, and blue cotton stockings. The gentleman apologised for the negligence of his attire, by stating that he was in 'reduced' circumstances. His employers, he said, had hit upon an ingenious mode of reimbursing themselves for the losses they sustained by trading

under the market price—which was simply paying their workmen one half of their wages, and owing them the other. On our enquiring with great sympathy, whether he was not desirous to get the last-mentioned moiety, he replied with real feeling, that he wished he might. He then begged the loan of a small pinch of snuff, sighed deeply, and withdrew.—*Ed. B.M.*

Messrs. Four, Two and One, many years resident on the Surrey side of the river Thames, beg most respectfully to announce to the play-going public, that in consequence of the increasing demand for all sorts of low-priced theatrical articles, they have at length succeeded in securing and entering upon those large, commodious, and formerly well-known high-priced premises situate in Drury-lane and Covent-garden; and having by this arrangement prevented the possibility of competition, they are determined to do business in future upon the Surrey-side system only. To prove the sincerity of their intentions, Four, Two and One take this opportunity of making known to the directors of theatrical establishments, that they have a number of hints ready cut and dried, upon the necessity of a general reduction of the salaries of the principal English *artistes*, which will be found singularly useful to managers taking a Continental trip for the purpose of securing Foreign talent for the London market.

F.T. and O. also recommend their celebrated elastic, self-acting, portable, Anglo-Parisian pen, skilfully contrived to fit all hands, and which enables the writer, after six lessons upon the Hamiltonian system, to translate any French piece into *Surrey-side English*; thereby superseding the necessity of employing and paying any author or adaptor who thinks it worth his while to embarrass himself with the study of reading, writing, or any other abstruse or outlandish knowledge whatsoever.

F.T. and O. cannot conclude without returning their most sincere and heartfelt thanks to the nobility, gentry, and friends of the drama generally, by whom their endeavours have been so eminently patronized. In particular, they should consider themselves guilty of the grossest ingratitude, did they omit this occasion of acknowledging their infinite obligations to the proprietors of the Patent establishments, who (by their active zeal, and indefatigable industry in the great cause of general reduction), have placed Four, Two and One, in their present premises, and have thereby enforced and illustrated this incontrovertible fact—that Sheridan, Harris, and Colman were mere humbugs and imposters compared with F.T. and O.; and, that during their long and high-priced professional career, they did nothing to obtain or preserve the protection of a candid and enlightened public."

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## CORRIGENDA

The following corrections should be made in *The Dickensian*, No. 323 (September, 1957):

Page 133, line 24. Read "Some ten months before her brother entered..." for "Within a week or so of the brother's entering..."

Page 135, line 1. Read "1824" for "1825"; line 2, "On October 6th, 1825" for "On the following October 6th"; line 4. "£32 14s. 11½d." for "£32 11s. 11d."

## DICKENS AND MELVILLE GO TO CHAPEL

By HARRY STONE

IT is fascinating to compare different artistic renditions of the same reality; it is especially fascinating when those renditions are by literary masters. An opportunity for this sort of comparison occurs in Dickens's *American Notes* (1842) and Melville's *Moby Dick* (1851). Each book describes the identical seaman's chapel and seaman's preacher; and each work re-creates the preacher's sermon.

This similarity is not the result of literary borrowing, although Melville most likely read the universally discussed *American Notes* and probably remembered Dickens's nautical chapel. More important, both authors had sat in the same Boston mariner's chapel and listened to "Father" Edward Thompson Taylor preach to his seafaring congregation.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, when Melville came to write *Moby Dick*, he sent Ishmael to the fictional equivalent of this seaman's chapel; and earlier, when Dickens fashioned his *American Notes*, he also took his reader to that self-same chapel. It is not surprising that both authors had visited the Seaman's Bethel and listened to Father Taylor. Father Taylor, a former sailor, was one of the standard "sights" of Boston, and was famous for his picturesque sermon technique and fervent religious faith. Contemporary portraits show him with a strong, heavily lined face; and contemporary accounts picture the squat chapel with its "Bethel" flag waving aloft, its high pulpit, and its painted drapery backdrop. This backdrop, mentioned by Dickens and Melville, was described by a contemporary observer as showing "a ship in a stiff breeze off a lee shore . . . High over the mast-head are dark storm-clouds, from one of which a remarkably small angel is seen, with outstretched arms . . . having just flung down a golden anchor bigger than itself, to aid the ship in her extremity."<sup>2</sup>

Dickens attended a service in this curious chapel on his first visit to America in 1842, and Melville must have been an attentive visitor at similar services, for his descriptions in *Moby Dick* of the preacher and his church include many identifying details. The similarities and differences in the two re-creations are striking, although the differences result in part from the fact that Dickens was giving a matter-of-fact description of Father Taylor's Seaman's Bethel for a book of travels, while Melville was using the same material as a symbolic segment of a complicated work of fiction. Nevertheless, both authors portray the chapel, the preacher, the prayer, the hymn, the sermon, and the delivery. But each author includes items unmentioned by the other—

<sup>1</sup> There were other seaman chapels in the area. However, Dickens specifically identifies his visit to Taylor's chapel; and the detailed chapel descriptions Melville includes in *Moby Dick* (see, for example, the chapel painting described below) make it clear that he too was drawing chiefly on a firsthand knowledge of Father Taylor and his chapel. For further discussion of this identification, see Luther S. Mansfield and Howard P. Vincent, *Moby Dick* (New York, 1952), pp. 614-615; Howard P. Vincent, *The Trying-out of Moby Dick* (Boston, 1949, pp. 66ff.; and R. E. Waters, "Boston's Salt-Water Preacher," *South Atlantic Quarterly*, XLV (July, 1946), pp. 359-360.

<sup>2</sup> John Ross Dix, *Pulpit Portraits, or Pen-Pictures of Distinguished American Divines . . .* (Boston, 1854), p. 120; for a general account of Taylor and his chapel see also Gilbert Haven and Thomas Russell, *Father Taylor, the Sailor Preacher* (Boston, 1872).

Dickens the choir and flag, for example; Melville the preacher's entrance and his clothing.

Dickens described Father Taylor as a former mariner who was "a weather-beaten hard-featured man, of about six or eight and fifty; with deep lines graven as it were into his face, dark hair, and a stern, keen eye. Yet the general character of his countenance was pleasant and agreeable."<sup>1</sup> Melville's picture of the same man (called Father Mapple in *Moby Dick*) is of a former seaman with "a certain venerable robustness." A man who was now in "the hardy winter of a healthy old age; that sort of old age which seems merging into a second flowering youth, for among all the fissures of his wrinkles, there shone certain mild gleams of a newly developing bloom" (p. 37). In other respects Melville is far more informative than Dickens. For instance, while Dickens tells us little more than that Father Taylor's odd and isolated pulpit is "raised on pillars", Melville devotes most of Chapter VIII to this object, and makes it the transcendental emblem of the preacher's unique spiritual position. Again, of the painted drapery, Dickens merely says it is "of a lively and somewhat theatrical appearance" (p. 67), while Melville describes it in detail and finds a message in its scene:

Between the marble cenotaphs on either hand of the pulpit, the wall which formed its back was adorned with a large painting representing a gallant ship beating against a terrible storm off a lee coast of black rocks and snowy breakers. But high above the flying scud and dark-rolling clouds, there floated a little isle of sunlight, from which beamed forth an angel's face, and this bright face shed a distinct spot of radiance upon the ship's tossed deck, something like that silver plate now inserted into the Victory's plank where Nelson fell. "Ah, noble ship," the angel seemed to say, "beat on, beat on, thou noble ship, and bear a hardy helm; for lo! the sun is breaking through; the clouds are rolling off—serenest azure is at hand" (pp. 38-39).

This difference in Dickens's and Melville's treatment of the chapel backdrop is typical of a larger difference. Dickens describes with condensed brilliance, but for the most part he is concerned here with representation. Melville, on the other hand, in the three chapters he devotes to the chapel episode, is using a real scene for more than representation. In the larger structure of his novel, the Seaman's Bethel conveys emblematically his meditations upon death ("The Chapel"), the rôle in life of the spiritual ("The Pulpit"), and the duty of man in relation to God ("The Sermon"). Much of this difference is a reflection of disparate purposes. But even so, Dickens's sharp visual imagery and theatrical associations reflect his point of view and interests, just as Melville's rhetorical philosophising and symbolic imagery reflect his.

What is perhaps perhaps most remarkable about these passages—so different in purpose and tendency—is their fundamental faithfulness to the scene they portray. This faithfulness is evident in spite of crucial differences in purpose and attitude. It is a

<sup>1</sup> American Notes, *The Works of Charles Dickens*, National Edition (London, 1907), XII, 67. Quotations from *Moby Dick* are from the Luther S. Mansfield and Howard P. Vincent edition referred to above. Both works are cited hereafter by page number within the text.

reflection of Dickens's and Melville's universality that each could portray a recognisable and congruent objective reality while at the same time subserving divergent ends. Both authors, for example, reproduce the rhythms, repetitions, nautical metaphors, and Biblical references of Father Taylor's sermons. And although Dickens is setting down a phonographic re-creation of the sermon and Melville a literary representation, the result is essentially similar. Here is Father Taylor speaking on a text from the Song of Songs:

Who are these—who are they—who are these fellows? where do they come from? Where are they going to?—Come from! What's the answer? . . . From below! . . . From below, my brethren. From under the hatches of sin, battened down above you by the evil one. That's where you came from! . . . and where are you going . . . where are you going? Aloft! . . . Aloft! . . . Aloft! . . . That's where you are going—with a fair wind—all taut and trim, steering direct for Heaven in its glory, where there are no storms or foul weather, and where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. (pp. 68-69).

And here is Father Mapple preaching on a text from Jonah:

This, shipmates, this is that other lesson; and woe to that pilot of the living God who slights it. Woe to him whom this world charms from Gospel duty! Woe to him who seeks to pour oil upon the waters when God has brewed them into a gale! Woe to him who seeks to please rather than to appal! Woe to him whose good name is more to him than goodness! Woe to him who, in this world, courts not dishonor! Woe to him who would not be true, even though to be false were salvation! Yea, woe to him who, as the great Pilot Paul has it, while preaching to others is himself a castaway! (p. 47.)

There are other similarities in these parallel sections of *American Notes* and *Moby Dick*. For instance, Dickens's and Melville's descriptions of the preacher frequently tally even in details of gesture and delivery. But there are differences as well. Dickens and Melville differed radically in their attitude toward religion. Dickens uses Father Taylor's simple beliefs to underline the pretentiousness of formal religion and ordinary preachers; Melville presents Father Mapple as a generalised justification of religion and its ministry. And yet when all doctrinaire differences and similarities are put aside, one overriding human impression remains. Both Dickens and Melville were strangely moved by this seaman preacher. Each saw in that American chapel the image of a good man. The "sincerity and sanctity", the "heavenly enthusiasm" of Melville's Father Mapple is the exact human equivalent of the "general sympathy and charity", the "rude eloquence" of Dickens's Father Taylor.

#### "THE NEW OXFORD ILLUSTRATED DICKENS"

This admirable edition is nearing its completion. Two new volumes have just been added, *Sketches by Boz* and in the other *American Notes or Pictures from Italy*.

## A VICTORIAN CANVAS

Mr. Neville Wallis, art critic of *The Observer*, using as his principal source, three volumes of autobiography published by W. P. Frith, R.A., in 1887-88, has made one very readable volume out of this mass of material. Although the book is by no means a complete record of the association of the two men, it contains many interesting references to the novelist.

One gets another view of Dickens; another aspect of such functions as the farewell dinner to Macready; of social evenings at Egg's cottage in Bayswater, with refractory cooks thrown in for good measure; of the extraordinary behaviour of such friends as Frank Stone and the commissioning by Dickens of the Dolly Varden and Kate Nickleby paintings.

Frith's criticism, at a portrait sitting, of Dickens's interpretation of Sam Weller, and Dickens's subsequent alteration is another of the many fascinating recollections of this artist. This and other references by Frith have already been used by F. G. Kitton in his *Charles Dickens by Pen and Pencil*—even so they are experiences worth re-telling. Even when Dickens is absent from the pages one or more of his friends are there, and as Frith's memories are called up in no chronological order, a leap back in time, often introduces yet another Dickensian association.

A most entertaining volume, packed, like Frith's great masterpieces, with crowds of interesting characters, scenes and anecdotes.  
J.G.

*A Victorian Canvas. The Memoirs of W. P. Frith, R.A.* Edited by Neville Wallis. Geoffrey Bles. 25s.

## NOTES ON GREAT EXPECTATIONS

By T. W. HILL

*Continued from Vol. LIII, page 186.*

### CHAPTER XVI

I. BOW STREET MEN FROM LONDON. This police force, known as Bow Street Runners, and as "red-breasts" from the colour of their waistcoats, were members of a small detective body, and could be summoned from their headquarters at Bow Street, London, to assist provincial authorities in the discovery of criminals. Lower Higham may seem a long way for them to come (about 25 miles) but it will be remembered that in *Oliver Twist* the Bow Street Runners went to Chertsey (30 miles) after Sikes's burglary.

2. MY SISTER LAY VERY ILL. As is usual with Dickens when describing symptoms of illness the details are almost as correct as though written by a medical man. Here the manifestations following concussion are most vivid, and can be followed through this and succeeding pages.

3. CONFIRMED HABIT OF LIVING. Taken apparently from Sir Thomas Browne's *Urn Burial* (chapter v): "The long habit of living indisposeth us for dying."

## CHAPTER XVII

1. MORE THAN A YEAR. In former days the period prescribed for wearing mourning garments was much longer than is customary now. A widow or widower wore deep mourning for a year and then half-mourning for a further six months. For uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces, cousins, and other relatives, mourning was worn for about six to nine months.

2. I'M JIGGERED. A mild form of oath originally used in the Navy; perhaps an equivalent to I'm cursed. The derivation is obscure and may be irreverent in origin. (See Partridge, *Dictionary of Slang*.)

## CHAPTER XVIII

1. FOURTH YEAR. Pip was now about 18 years old. See chapter xxxix, note 1.

2. TIMON OF ATHENS. Wopsle's coroner was endowed with all the dignity and nobility of character of Timon before he became a misanthrope. (See Shakespeare's play.)

3. CORIOLANUS. The beadle shewed the same scorn for the citizens that Coriolanus did in Shakespeare's play. It recalls Dickens's hatred of officialdom for which Bumble was so notable in *Oliver Twist*.

4. WELL AND TRULY TRY. The phrase used in the oath administered to jurors.

5. DO YOU KEEP A DOG? Joe's dog referred to by Pip in chapter iii. Hereafter the dog does not appear in the narrative.

6. BRAG IS A GOOD DOG. Brag as the name for a dog is very old and is found as far back as the fifteenth century. The present proverb, used by Jaggers, is included in Dyke's *English Proverbs*, 1748, and this is foreshadowed by Shakespeare in *King Henry the Fifth*:

"For oaths are straws, men's faiths are wafer-cakes,  
And hold-fast is the only dog, my duck."

(Act ii, scene 2).

7. A LONG PURSE. Purses were originally, often knitted or crocheted, with two pouches and secured by rings. Obviously a long purse would hold more than a short one and the pouches would be proportionately bigger. Hence the modern figurative meaning of the term, although purses are usually of leather.

## CHAPTER XIX

1. RICH MAN AND THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. The passage referred to: "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven" occurs in three of the gospels. We are not told which Sunday Joe and Pip went to church, but the choice is wide as the Lectionary of the Church of England printed at the beginning of the Book of Common Prayer directed, at the time of the story that "the New Testament is appointed for the Second Lesson . . . and shall be read over orderly Every Year thrice . . ." This gives nine opportunities: from St. Matthew on Jan. 21st, May 21st and Sept. 28th;

from St. Mark on Feb. 10th, June 9th, Oct. 7th; and from St. Luke on Mar. 7th, July 6th and Nov. 2nd. The original Lectionary was settled in 1661 and remained in force till 1867 when it was revised, the length of the individual lessons shortened, and the New Testament is now read through "orderly" twice, so that Pip and Joe, were they living to-day would have a choice of six Sundays instead of nine.

2. "WE CHANGED, we changed again . . . we changed again . . . and yet again." Assuming that Rochester is "Our Town" there were four changes of horses in twenty-six miles.

## CHAPTER XX

1. CROSS KEYS, WOOD STREET. An old coaching inn, no. 128 Wood Street, behind the famous old tree at the Cheapside end of Wood Street. Estella arrived here in chapter xxxii. In "Dulborough Town" (*Uncommercial Traveller*) it is this inn at which Dickens arrived as a boy. It was pulled down in 1865.

2. LITTLE BRITAIN. A street running from Aldersgate to Smithfield. It gets its curious name, as spelt, since 1600, from having been the site of the town mansion of the Dukes of Briton (Brittany). (Stowe.)

3. HAMMERCLOTH. The coachman's seat, sometimes called the box-seat, both names coming from the fact that underneath the seat was a box in which were kept a hammer and other tools available for emergency repairs on the road. The seat was draped with a hammer-cloth and in the case of state coaches luxuriously upholstered.

4. SIX GREAT CORONETS. Many of the early coaches plying for hire had once been the property of the titled gentry, and the armorial bearings emblazoned on the door-panels were not always removed.

5. A SHILLING. Coach hire cost much the same in those times as cab-fares do now; the distance from Wood Street to Little Britain is only a little more than a quarter of a mile.

6. SMITHFIELD. Dickens could remember Smithfield when it was an open-air cattle-market for live animals, with slaughter-houses "asmear with filth and fat and blood and foam". The area is now, since 1855, covered by the London Central Markets and the name only survives in West Smithfield, the buildings on the southern portion of the area.

7. MINISTER OF JUSTICE. Dickens's facetious term (a minister is a servant) for the warden or gate-keeper at Newgate.

8. PUBLICLY WHIPPED. The punishment has never been formally abolished, but is not inflicted nowadays except for crimes of violence and never, since 1863, in any case publicly.

9. CAG-MAGGERTH. The Jew's rendering of "cag-maggers", dealers in cag-mag, a term about 150 years old for odds-and-ends, scraps or refuse, especially of meat. Its derivation is obscure, and may be from caggmagg, an elderly goose (Grose).

10. OUTRUNNING THE CONSTABLE. Originally this phrase had the literal meaning of fleeing from arrest for debt: "I far'd like one that had tride the use of his legs to out-run the constable"

(Kemp: *Nine daies wonder*, 1600). It gradually acquired its present figurative meaning of allowing one's expenditure to exceed income. In *Pickwick Papers*, chapter xlii, Sam Weller paraphrases it amusingly: "He run a match agin the constable and vun it."

## CHAPTER XXI

1. LADY AND A WEEPING WILLOW. The old-fashioned mourning brooches are very seldom seen now, and never as the fastening of a gentleman's tie. They were made of jet with a relief design in ivory or other white material, generally representing a tombstone or a sepulchral monument over which a weeping willow throws its branches, and at which is kneeling a female form in a very long gown.

2. FORTY TO FIFTY YEARS. Wemmick's age is given in note 1 to chapter xxxix.

3. MOUTH WAS SUCH A POST-OFFICE. Not quite a post-office, but the wide slit in a pillar-box or in a post office window.

4. HAMMERSMITH. The precise situation of the Pockets' house is not given but from the description of the garden, overlooking the river, it has been suggested that it may have been in The Mall. The only doubt in such an identification is that in chapter xxxiii, when in the post-chaise on the way to Richmond "when we passed through Hammersmith I shewed her where Mr. Matthew Pocket lived." The Mall would not be visible from a post-chaise on the main road.

5. BARNARD'S INN. An Inn of Chancery attached to Gray's Inn and dating from the fifteenth century. Originally it belonged to Dr. Mackworth Dean of Lincoln; it got its present name from Lionel Bernard (pronounced Barnard) who rented it. It was sold in 1888 and now belongs to the Mercers School, the boys using the Hall as a refectory. The students' chambers from which Herbert Pocket "looked about him" have disappeared to make accommodation for the school.

6. POTTLE OF STRAWBERRIES. In "dry measure" of capacity, used for grain, stricken measure, and fruit, heaped measure, now obsolete and superseded by avoirdupois (measure by weight), a pottle, i.e., a little pot, is half a gallon or two quarts. The term was also applied to a small basket for holding fruit, now superseded by the "chip-basket", and this is probably the pottle that Herbert carried.

## CHAPTER XXII

1. MORAL BOY OUT OF THE SPELLING BOOK. The Spelling-book was probably that of the Rev. William Mavor (1758-1837) which had an enormous vogue for over a century. It contained not only long lists of words for spelling exercise, but also short tales of a moralising tendency to inculcate good behaviour.

2. HARMONIOUS BLACKSMITH. A favourite composition (by Handel) with Dickens, who uses it to express the same harmonious purposes as here to emphasise the serenity of John Carker in *Dombey and Son*.

3. LAP OF LUXURY. The lap as that part of a skirt or dress

that can be held up to hold or catch anything, has been used figuratively for many years. "Yonge gentlemen haue often-times tolde to them and (as it is vulgarely spoken) layde in their lappes . . ." (*Elyot on Government*, 1531); "Nursed in the lap of indolence" (Morse, *American Geography*, 1796); "Brought up in the lap of luxury" (Maria Edgeworth, *Moral Tales*, 1802); "Rear'd in luxury's lap" (Byron, *Werner*, 1822), etc.

4. MELTED BUTTER IN THE ARMCHAIR . . . Another instance of Dickensian fun at the muddle of a bachelor's dinner when the influence of a housekeeper is absent is given in *Martin Chuzzlewit*. Contrast John Westlock's breakfast in chapter xxxv of that book with the orderliness of the dinner in chapter xlv when he had the assistance of a "fiery-faced matron in a crushed bonnet."

5. WORTHY OF A MUCH BETTER CAUSE. A common saying that has become almost proverbial. Shakespeare uses it in his usual effective way in *Cymbeline*:

"Thou may'st be valiant in a better cause,  
But now thou seem'st a coward."

(Act iii, scene 4).

6. FIVE AND TWENTY YEARS AGO. See also chapter xxxix, note 1. Dickens's own memorandum on this reads: "Herbert Pocket speaks of Miss Havisham's matter having happened 'five and twenty years ago' at that time. Pip is—say 18 or 19—consequently it happened 6 or 7 years before Pip and Estella—she is about his age—were born. But say that the matter was a year or so in hand—which it would be—that would reduce it to 5 or 6 years before they were born."

7. HALF-PRICE TO THE THEATRE. The custom was to admit the public to all parts of the house at half-price at the end of the first play; there were usually two or three plays at each performance, the last being commonly a farce.

## CHAPTER XXIII

1. ORANGE-FLOWER WATER. The water residuum formed by the distillation from the flowers of the bitter orange of neroli-oil, which is used in the manufacture of perfumes. Orange-flower water has the reputation of being a mild tonic.

2. ACCIDENTAL DECEASED KNIGHT. Not a knight who perished by accidental death, but a knight created by accident, as in the case of the late Sir Thomas Tippins, who, in *Our Mutual Friend*, is said to have been "knighted in mistake for somebody else."

3. DRUMMLE WHOSE CHRISTIAN NAME WAS BENTLEY. Did Dickens bestow this curious Christian name on Mr. Drummle from some recollection of the proprietor of Bentley's Miscellany, of which he had been the first editor in 1837? Did the old dispute still rankle after nearly a quarter of a century and so endow an unpleasant character with a name of unpleasant associations?

4. FOUR LITTLE GIRLS. And two little boys, and a baby, and Herbert, and Charlotte (deceased, chapter xxx). What a family! Nine in all and one more on the way. Observe the interval between Herbert aged about 19 and Jane who was probably about 10.

5. DYING GLADIATOR. This famous statue, the Borghese Gladiator, also known as the Dying Gaul, is now in the Louvre. It is the work of Agasias, a great sculptor of the first century B.C. and was discovered at Nettuno (the ancient Actium) a few miles south of Rome on the west coast of Italy. The Apollo Belvidere was also found here.

## CHAPTER XXV

1. BRITANNIA METAL. An alloy, invented in 1770 of tin, antimony and copper. It forms a good base for electro-plating, but by itself it will take a high polish simulating silver, and was therefore popular for table use for many years.

2. HE'D HAVE THEIR LIVES. Theft of goods to the value of 40s. from a dwelling house was punishable by death. This extreme penalty was abolished in 1861.

3. COLLECTION OF BLACK LANES. A not inaccurate description of the district bounded by Kennington Park, Old Kent Road, and Camberwell. It was low-lying, marshy, and traversed by a network of numerous ditches. A part was cultivated as market gardens and there were a few scattered houses and cottages; perhaps Wemmick's castle was one of these. It was not till after 1840 or thereabouts that the many small streets began to appear, and by 1870 the area had become thickly built over.

4. BRAZEN BIJOU. Bijou is French, probably from the Breton (celtic) bizon, an ornamental finger-ring. In England it is applied to anything elegant, pretty or dainty, such as an article of jewellery, or even a tiny attractive residence. It here refers to a small delicately-made brass swing-bracket, a sort of crane, over the fireplace. From it was suspended the roasting-jack, a hook actuated by clock-work, from which was hung the joint that was kept turning while being roasted in front of the fire.

## CHAPTER XXVI

1. GERRARD STREET, SOHO. In the eighteenth century a street of many literary associations. It was named after Gerard, Earl of Macclesfield who had a town house here. The street was built in 1677 and was well known to Johnson as The Club met here weekly at the Turk's Head tavern. Dryden had a house here, as did also Edmund Burke; it was also the first home of the Linnean Society.

2. FIERY AIR LIKE THE FACES . . . OUT OF THE WITCHES' CAULDRON. A reference to *Mabeth*, act iv, scene i.

## CHAPTER XXVII

1. AVENGING PHANTOM. Hereinafter called the Avenger. This amusing epithet for a page-boy reminds one that David Copperfield's incompetent servant, Mary Anne, was known as The Paragon.

2. LIKE A BIRD'S NEST WITH EGGS IN IT. See chapter note 1 for another reference to Joe's tender treatment of his hat.

3. ROSCIAN RENOWN. A Roscius is an outstanding actor, from Roscius Quintus, the friend of Cicero, famous for his histrionic powers.

4. LOOK AT THE BLACKING WARE'US. The reference to the "red bills at the shop doors" shews that Joe and Wopsle had walked along High Holborn to admire the handsome classic building (no. 97) that housed Day and Martin from 1770 to 1890.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

1. HALF WAY HOUSE. Col. Gadd identifies this with the "Guy, Earl of Warwick" at Welling. It stands about midway between London and Gravesend, and used to be known as the half-way house. In chapter xlix Pip alighted here and walked the remainder of the way, about eighteen miles, to Rochester ("Our Town"). The inn was one of the regular stopping places for the Dover coaches. It was pulled down in 1926 and a new inn erected a few yards to the east.

2. AS SOON AS WE TOUCHED THE TOWN. This must mean immediately the coach had crossed the river over the Medway; the Blue Boar ("the Bull inn") was only a few yards on the right in the High Street.

3. MENTOR. The loyal and devoted friend of Ulysses, Mentor's name has become proverbial for a faithful adviser.

4. OUR YOUNG TELEMACHUS. Telemachus in the Greek mythology was the son of Ulysses and Penelope. While still an infant his father was absent from home for twenty years when Telemachus went in search of him (Homer's *Iliad*).

5. QUINTIN MATSYS. Sometimes called Massys (c. 1456-1530). Traditionally said to have begun life as a blacksmith in Louvain, he settled in Antwerp in 1491 and became the celebrated painter. Hence the references to Pumblechook and Pip in this delightful specimen of provincial journalism.

6. VERB. SAP. A contraction of the latin *verbum satis sapienti*, a word is enough to the wise.

## CHAPTER XXIX

1. MISS HAVISHAM'S SIDE OF THE TOWN. Which was not Joe's side. Miss Havisham's residence (identified as "Restoration House" in the Maidstone Road) called in the book Satis House, is at the eastern end of Rochester city, while Pip's village at Lower Higham is four miles to the north-west.

2. TAG AND RAG AND BOBTAIL. The mob; the rabble. Brewer says they were originally varieties of mongrel dogs. In Bale's *Vocacyon* (1533) occurs: "All the rabble of the shippe, hag, and tag, and rag"; and in *Harsnet* (1603): "For all were there, tag and ragge, cut and bobtayle." Shakespeare makes tag cover them all in *Coriolanus*: "Will you hence before the tag return." (Act iii, scene 1.)

3. NO DISCREPANCY OF YEARS. Estella and Pip were "about the same age". See chapter xxxix, note 1.

4. IT IS HAVISHAM. Miss Havisham did not know who Estella was when she adopted the two-year-old baby (chapter xliv) and so apparently bestowed her own name on the child.

5. TEARING OFF HER CAP. Women habitually wore, when indoors, a cap usually made of fine linen ornamented with lace,

ribbon, etc. This form of head-dress only survives now for domestic servants.

### CHAPTER XXX

1. LOOP OF ABOUT A COUPLE OF MILES. If the identifications with reference to "Our Town" are correct, Pip must have gone south of Rochester nearly as far as Borstal before returning to the High Street; he probably came back by way of the Cathedral precincts or by the Maidstone Road, then known as Crown Lane.

2. AGAIN BEHELD TRABB'S BOY. Between the Maidstone Road and the foot of Rochester Bridge there are a good many courts and alleys by which Trabb's boy could execute his annoying manoeuvres, although the whole distance is not much more than the 200 yards mentioned.

3. HYDE PARK CORNER. This looks like an overstatement, but it serves as a reminder that there is a public clock over the gateway into Hyde Park; the distance from Pip's chambers is more than three miles.

4. GIFT HORSE'S MOUTH. A proverb and a sermon combined, and two thousand years old. St. Jerome in his Commentary to the Epistle to the Ephesians (A.D. 51) wrote: "Noli equi dentes inspicere donati". In English it appears in 1310 as "A gyuen hors may not be loked in the tethe" (Stanbridge's *Vulgaria*). Taverner in his *Book of Proverbs* (1539) presents it in its modern form: "A gyuen horse (we saye) maye not be loked in the mouth."

5. SISTER CHARLOTTE. See chapter xxiii, note 3.

### CHAPTER XXXI

1. THE "KETTLE-DRUM." The common name for the side-drum which is carried in front of the player and suspended from his shoulders by straps. It is cylindrical (usually brass) and encircled top and bottom by bands connected by rope lashings, making the epithet in the text very appropriate. The real kettle-drum is a copper shell (or kettle) across the top of which the skin "drumhead" is stretched; this drum either stands on the ground for use with an orchestra, or, for use with cavalry bands is suspended, as one of a pair, on either side of a horse's neck.

2. EXTRAORDINARY FIRE OFFICE. A delightful simile at the time when the story was written. Mr. Wopsle's badge is a reminder to the modern reader that the various Fire Insurance Companies affixed to insured premises "fire-marks", i.e., plates made of lead, copper or iron, shewing the emblem of the particular Office. The practice was abandoned soon after 1860, but many of the "fire-marks" remained on the buildings for years. They are much sought after by collectors of antiquities.

3. COACH OFFICE IN WOOD STREET. See chapter xx, note 1.

4. LOOK AT NEWGATE. Dickens was much interested by Old Newgate at all times. He visited it many times and described it in *Sketches by Boz*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Barnaby Rudge*, while in this book he refers to it twice, in chapter xx and here. The building was pulled down in 1902 and replaced by the Central Criminal Court.

(To be continued)

# DICKENS FELLOWSHIP DIARY

Branch Secretaries are invited to send copies of their syllabus to aid the Editor in the compilation of this Diary of Events.

*Headquarters Meetings on page iii of cover.*

|             |       |      |                                                                                 |
|-------------|-------|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Bath        | Jan.  | 6th  | New Year Social.                                                                |
|             | "     | 20th | Reading Circle.                                                                 |
|             | Feb.  | 3rd  | Reading Circle.                                                                 |
|             | "     | 7th  | Dickens Commemoration, Pump Room.                                               |
|             | "     | 17th | Reading Circle.                                                                 |
|             | Mar.  | 3rd  | Reading Circle.                                                                 |
|             | "     | 10th | Whist Drive.                                                                    |
|             | "     | 17th | Reading Circle.                                                                 |
|             | "     | 31st | Reading Circle.                                                                 |
|             | April | 14th | Whist Drive.                                                                    |
| Blackburn   | "     | 28th | Paper by Mr. K. Webb.                                                           |
|             | May   | 5th  | Annual General Meeting.                                                         |
|             | Jan.  | 10th | New Year Party.                                                                 |
|             | "     | 24th | " Second String." Mrs. A. T. Starks.                                            |
|             | Feb.  | 7th  | Birthday Dinner.                                                                |
|             | "     | 21st | Charles Dickens: (a) The Reformer. Mr. J. Stopford. (b) The Man. Miss A. Berry. |
|             | Mar.  | 7th  | Whist Drive.                                                                    |
|             | "     | 21st | " The Key of the Street." Mr. C. J. Wellings.                                   |
|             | "     | 25th | Visit to Preston Branch.                                                        |
|             | April | 10th | (Sat.)—N.W. Regional Group Conference.                                          |
| Blackpool   | Jan.  | 9th  | New Year Party.                                                                 |
|             | "     | 23rd | " With Dickens in Yorkshire." Miss L. Garside.                                  |
|             | Feb.  | 6th  | Birthday Dinner.                                                                |
|             | "     | 20th | Visit from Lytham St. Anne's Branch.                                            |
|             | Mar.  | 6th  | Visit from Blackpool L. and S. Society.                                         |
|             | "     | 20th | Dramatic Evening produced by Mrs. W. Wilson.                                    |
| Broadstairs | "     | 28th | Visit to Lytham St. Anne's Branch.                                              |
|             | April | 17th | Annual Meeting.                                                                 |
|             | Jan.  | 6th  | The Victorian Theatre, Mr. H. W. Hazelwood.                                     |
|             | Feb.  | 3rd  | Films by Mr. Armitage. Arr. by Mr. Butchard.                                    |
|             | Mar.  | 3rd  | Education in Dickens's Day. Mr. Warren.                                         |
|             | Apr.  | 7th  | <i>Hard Times</i> , Success or Failure, Mr. Clifton Robins.                     |
| Eastbourne  | Jan.  | 3rd  | Travel Talk. Rev. H. Ingham, D.D.                                               |
|             | "     | 17th | Dramatic Entertainment.                                                         |
|             | "     | 21st | Orchestral Concert.                                                             |
|             | Mar.  | 7th  | "A Dickens Alphabet." Dr. Daphne Dear.                                          |
|             | "     | 21st | " Newspapers Old and New." Mr. K. Knight.                                       |
| Hull        | Jan.  | 3rd  | New Year Revels and Fair.                                                       |
|             | "     | 31st | " The Art of Dickens." Prof. G. E. T. Mayfield.                                 |
|             | Feb.  | 8th  | Birthday Dinner.                                                                |
|             | Mar.  | 7th  | President's Evening.                                                            |
|             | "     | 21st | Whist Drive.                                                                    |
|             | April | 11th | Entertainment by Drama Section.                                                 |
| Madison     | May   | 2nd  | Annual General Meeting.                                                         |
|             | Jan.  | 22nd | Reading <i>Dombey and Son</i> .                                                 |
|             | Feb.  | 26th | " Dickens on Courtship and Marriage." Prof. Glicksman.                          |
|             | Mar.  | 26th | Reading <i>Dombey and Son</i> .                                                 |
|             | April | 23rd | Reading <i>Dombey and Son</i> .                                                 |
| Manchester  | Jan.  | 10th | Play-reading from <i>Martin Chuzzlewit</i> .                                    |
|             | "     | 24th | <i>Pictures from Italy</i> . Miss Mary Corney.                                  |
|             | Feb.  | 8th  | Birthday Luncheon.                                                              |
|             | "     | 21st | " The Story of Bleak House," Mrs. M. R. Wilson.                                 |
|             | Mar.  | 7th  | Visit of Manchester Pickwick Club.                                              |
|             | "     | 21st | Papers on Book of the Year.                                                     |
| Nottingham  | April | 11th | Annual General Meeting.                                                         |
|             | Jan.  | 4th  | Readings, <i>Little Dorrit</i> . Miss D. Beardsley.                             |
|             | "     | 18th | Readings, <i>Little Dorrit</i> . Mr. R. Hillery.                                |
|             | Feb.  | 1st  | Readings, <i>Little Dorrit</i> . Mr. and Mrs. L. H. Gunn.                       |

|                       |            |                                                                           |
|-----------------------|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Nottingham<br>(cont.) | 15th       | Birthday Party.                                                           |
|                       | Mar. 1st   | Readings, <i>Little Dorrit</i> . The Misses M. and D. Glover.             |
|                       | 15th       | Readings, <i>Little Dorrit</i> . Miss A. Clay.                            |
|                       | 29th       | Readings, <i>Little Dorrit</i> . Mrs. A. Johnstone.                       |
| Pittsburgh            | April 26th | Readings, <i>Little Dorrit</i> . Miss D. Rowen.                           |
|                       | Jan. 13th  | "The American Literary Scene of the 1840's."                              |
|                       | Mar. 10th  | "Pecksniff—A Study in Hypocrisy." Mrs. Henry Hebley.                      |
|                       | April 7th  | "Eden—As seen by Mark Twain and Charles Dickens." Mrs. T. Stanley Cooper. |
| Portsmouth            | Jan. 14th  | Party.                                                                    |
|                       | 28th       | Members' Contest Night.                                                   |
|                       | Feb. 8th   | Birthday Dinner.                                                          |
|                       | 11th       | Surprise Night.                                                           |
|                       | 25th       | Members' Essays and Mimes.                                                |
|                       | Mar. 11th  | "Biographies of Words." Mr. K. S. W. Walker.                              |
|                       | 25th       | "???" Rev. Godfrey Foster.                                                |
|                       | April 8th  | "Some Seafaring Characters." Mrs. Jane Bacon.                             |
|                       | 22nd       | "Shopping with Dickens." Rev. T. C. Heritage.                             |
|                       | Jan. 14th  | Members' Night.                                                           |
| Preston               | 28th       | "Cathedrals in Dickens."                                                  |
|                       | Feb. 11th  | Birthday Dinner.                                                          |
|                       | 25th       | Visit from members of Lytham St. Anne's Branch.                           |
|                       | Mar. 11th  | "Houses and Homes in Dickens." Miss A. E. Hargreaves.                     |
|                       | 25th       | Visit from members of Blackburn Branch.                                   |
|                       | April 15th | Social Evening and Bring and Buy Sale.                                    |
|                       | 29th       | Annual Meeting.                                                           |
| Rochester             | Jan. 23rd  | "Historic and Dickensian Rochester." Miss A. Butler.                      |
|                       | Feb. 7th   | Dickens Birthday Party.                                                   |
|                       | 20th       | Annual General Meeting and Members' Night.                                |
|                       | Mar. 20th  | "Marriage through the eyes of Dickens." Canon K. V. J. Ball, M.A.         |
|                       | April 17th | "Dickens and Disease." Mr. E. J. Greenwood, F.R.C.S.                      |
| Sheffield             | Jan. 6th   | "Dickens in America." Mr. W. Keen.                                        |
|                       | Feb. 3rd   | "Dickens in Relation to his Age." Dr. F. T. Wood.                         |
|                       | 7th        | Birthday Dinner.                                                          |
|                       | Mar. 3rd   | <i>Martin Chuzzlewit</i> . Dr. H. Kirk-Smith.                             |
|                       | 31st       | Members' Night.                                                           |
| Southend              | April 14th | "Pride—the Enemy" ( <i>Dombey and Son</i> ). Mr. N. St. John Shembridge.  |
|                       | Jan. 8th   | Whist Drive.                                                              |
|                       | 18th       | Dinner and Dance.                                                         |
|                       | 29th       | Reading.                                                                  |
|                       | Feb. 5th   | Whist Drive.                                                              |
|                       | 8th        | Dance.                                                                    |
|                       | Mar. 5th   | Whist Drive.                                                              |
|                       | 8th        | Dance.                                                                    |
|                       | 19th       | Reading.                                                                  |
|                       | April 9th  | Whist Drive.                                                              |
| Tewkesbury            | Jan. 7th   | New Year Party.                                                           |
|                       | Feb. 4th   | Birthday Dinner.                                                          |
|                       | Mar. 4th   | Annual Business Meeting.                                                  |
| Wolver-<br>hampton    | Jan. 11th  | "The Story of Wolverhampton." Mr. E. B. Dorrance.                         |
|                       | Feb. 8th   | Dramatic Entertainment arr. by Mrs. G. Scott John Brown.                  |
|                       | Mar. 8th   | "The Abolitionist." Miss M. Starkey.                                      |
|                       | April 12th | Dickensian Readings and Recitals. Mr. Eugene Blanchet.                    |

## THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

Our thanks are extended to the following retiring branch secretaries and our congratulations to their successors.

Mrs. R. P. Burrows who succeeds Miss A. Johnstone at Brisbane.

Mrs. I. J. Pemberton who succeeds Mrs. L. G. Pocock at Vancouver.

Mrs. Lucie Hopkins who succeeds Miss E. I. Coggins at East Bay.

Mrs. P. Hammer who succeeds Mrs. J. C. D. Mack at Madison.

Mr. C. W. Darling who succeeds Mr. R. Metcalf at Bristol.

The Birmingham Branch is again to the fore with its first-class amateur dramatics. Their latest production, "Old Wine and New Bottles," embodying a number of scenes from Dickens, was so successful that a revival was called for at the recent opening of the Birmingham Theatre Centre. The moving spirit of the enterprise was again Mr. Victor Simons, who has been responsible for a number of productions staged by the Birmingham Branch in recent years.

A novel idea for raising money for Branch Funds was recently put into practice at the Southend Branch. Two members staged an exhibition of Victoriana. The plan created a good deal of local attention and was highly successful.

The *Portsmouth Evening News* recently gave prominence to the long record of service to the local branch of the Fellowship by Miss Emily Martyr, who, owing to an accident some years since, has perforce to curb her activities in these days.

---

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|                     | £ | s. | d. |                  | £ | s. | d. |
|---------------------|---|----|----|------------------|---|----|----|
| Auckland Branch     | 5 | 0  | 0  | Los Angeles      | 0 | 10 | 0  |
| Palos Verdes Branch | 2 | 0  | 0  | Vancouver Branch | 1 | 16 | 9  |
| (2nd donation)      |   |    |    | (2nd donation)   |   |    |    |

## Obituary

### WILLIAM MILLER

By the death, on August 21st last, of William Miller, in his eighty-eighth year, the Fellowship loses its last founder member. His services to it were many and varied. He acted as Secretary to the first Dickens Exhibition in 1903, he was elected to the Committee formed to launch *The Dickensian* in 1904 and remained until 1940, he was Hon. Librarian of the Fellowship from 1903 until 1925, and he was a Trustee of the Dickens House from 1925 until 1940, when he temporarily left England for America. In 1936 he organised the Pickwick Centenary Exhibition at Doughty Street, and in conjunction with E. H. Strange, produced a *Centenary Bibliography* of that book. About this time he originated a small Collectors' Circle which met at Dickens House, but did not survive the war. Despite the anxieties of the time and the separation from his vast Dickensian collection in England, the now seventy-year-old Miller set to work at Harvard Library and produced *The Dickens Student and Collector*, a bibliography of Dickensiana, which, sponsored by the Boston Branch of the Fellowship, was published by the Harvard University Press in 1946. He returned to England in 1945 and published supplements to his book in 1947 and 1953. A further work, the occupation of a lifetime, is a grangerised copy of Forster's *Life of Dickens*, extended by the addition of a wealth of valuable material, to twelve large volumes. He was a specialist rather than an all-round Dickensian; biography and bibliography were his subjects, the latter almost amounting to a passion, and when asked for information, gave ungrudgingly of his endless store. His last public appearance was at the Fellowship Jubilee Dinner in 1952. His later years were burdened by ill-health but his enthusiasm for Dickens remained undimmed to the last. Our deepest sympathy is extended to Mrs. Miller, and to the two sons and a daughter who have survived him..

O.D.S.

### J. D. BILLINGTON

The death of Mr. J. D. Billington came as a great shock to his many friends as he had been extremely active until he met with an accident only shortly before. He occupied innumerable posts in the course of his many years of membership, including Chairman of both Committee and Council, and a Trustee of the Dickens House. As a constant attendant at Conference he endeared himself to a wide circle of friends, and was highly esteemed for his untiring devotion to the Fellowship. Our condolences are offered to Mrs. Billington and to his daughter.

A.W.E.

We also regret to record the death of:

Mrs. G. F. Young and Mrs. Charles of Headquarters; Mrs. J. M. Corney, Mrs. Norman Needham, and Mr. T. H. Moffet, of Manchester; Mrs. Wright of Birmingham; Mrs. Maud Orton of Boston; Mr. Arthur Jordan of Pittsburgh; Mrs. C. Hayden, Mrs. A. Vinje, and Mrs. W. Tottingham of Madison.

# WALTER T. SPENCER

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## The Dickens Fellowship LONDON MEETINGS

All Meetings, unless otherwise stated, at Swedenborg Hall, Bloomsbury  
Way, at 7 p.m.

- Jan. 28th "Turning Books into Films" by Mr. L. A. G. Strong.
- Feb. 4th Dickens Birthday Dinner at Cafe Royal, 7 p.m. Tickets,  
30/- each.
- " 20th "Through the Stage Door" by Mr. W. Macqueen Pope.
- " 22nd Visit to Muniment Room, Westminster Abbey. All places  
filled.
- Mar. 26th "Relative Random Readings" by Mr. Leo Mason.
- April 16th Annual General Meeting, followed by "Detectives from  
Dickens to Doyle" by Mr. Gavin C. Brend.  
*Note:* There are four vacancies on Committee. Nominations  
should be sent to the Hon. Sec. at 48 Doughty Street,  
not later than April 1st. Nominations must be in writing  
supported by a seconder, and the written consent of those  
nominated.
- " 19th Ramble: "Lambeth" by Mrs. J. Bacon. Meet outside  
Lambeth Old Church next to Lambeth Palace at 2-30 p.m.

# THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

LIST OF BRANCHES WITH HON. SECRETARIES.

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**SIMONEWSBURY** (No. 14).—Mrs. H. M. CROCKITT, 84 Ashley Street.

**SOUTHEND AND DISTRICT** (No. 54).—Mrs. MADGE WITHERS, 20 Lime Ave., Leigh-on-Sea.

**TWICKENHAM** (No. 74).—L. G. MARETON, Rosemead, 84 Barton Road.

**WOLVERHAMPTON** (No. 136).—Mrs. G. CONWAY, 123 Trysall Road.

## HOLLAND

**HAARLEM** (No. 142).—Mr. Nico ANDRIJSEN, Marcellusvaartpad II, Overveen.

## AUSTRALIA.

**ADELAIDE** (No. 127).—Miss E. WHITE, 68 Atli Street, Unley, South Australia.

**BRISBANE** (No. 82).—Mrs. K. P. BURROWS, Floor, AMP Bldg., Edward Street.

**MELBOURNE** (No. 24).—Miss McMEERIN, Clendon Road, Armadale, Victoria, S.E.3

**SYDNEY** (N.S.W.) (No. 64).—Mrs. L. BARNES, 1 The Strand, Rockdale.

## NEW ZEALAND.

**AUCKLAND** (No. 99).—Miss B. WRIGHT, 11 Gale Terrace, Hemes Bay.

**CHRISTCHURCH** (No. 117).—Miss P. BRUNT, Palmers Road, New Brighton.

**DUNEDIN** (No. 139).—Miss V. G. McLEAN, Haddon Place, C2.

**WELLINGTON** (No. 121).—Mrs. D. M. MacLURE, 59 Kemp Street, Kilsbnie.

## CANADA.

**EDMONTON (Alberta)** (No. 100).—Mrs. FR. MARKPICH, 10219 140th Street

**MONTREAL** (Que.) (No. 53).—Miss G. White, 3 Walkley Avenue.

**TORONTO (Ont.)** (No. 32).—Mrs. E. L. SCH, 66 Lankin Blvd.

**VANCOUVER** (B.C.) (No. 24).—Mrs. I. J. PERRY, 4640 W. 15th Avenue.

**VICTORIA** (B.C.) (No. 113).—Mrs. D. H. White, V.W.C.A.

**WINNIPEG (Manitoba)** (No. 25).—Mrs. P. S. MURPHY, 59 Menck Avenue, Norwood.

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

**BLOOMINGTON** (Indiana) (No. 140).—Mrs. E. HERY, 324 S. Highland.

**BOSTON** (Mass.) (No. 73).—Mrs. MARTHA RIPLEY, 141 Englewood Avenue, Brookline

**CALIFORNIA PICKWICK CLUB** (No. 131).—J. KUNICE GRIFFITHS, 5118 7th Ave, Los Angeles

**CHESTER** (Pa.) (No. 22).—Mrs. JOHN O'BRIEN, 740 Irvington Road.

**CHICAGO** (Ill.) (No. 33).—Mrs. DAMARIS BRADFORD, 6060 N. Paulina Street.

**EAST BAY, BERKELEY** (Cal.) (No. 95).—J. LUCIE HOKKINS, 3053 Hillegas Ave., Berkeley

**EVERETT** (Wash.) (No. 82).—Mrs. S. MILLER, 4022 High Street.

**HONOLULU** (Hawaii) (No. 115).—Mrs. HELENA, University of Hawaii.

**KOKOMO** (Ind.) (No. 143).—Mrs. E. E. BROOKS, 317 N. Armstrong Street.

**LOS ANGELES** (Cal.) (No. 89).—Mrs. J. STEIN, 3953 S. Ruthellen Avenue.

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**MARINETTE** (Wis.) (No. 108).—Mrs. EARL H. HARRIS, 1803 Riverside Avenue.

**MARYVILLE** (Missouri) (No. 133).—Mrs. A. HARVEY, 722 North Fillmore St., Maryville, Mo. U.S.A.

**NEW YORK CITY** (N.Y.) (No. 29).—Mrs. VALENTINE, 160 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn

**OAKLAND ST. ALBERTS COLLEGE** (No. 141).—Rev. JOSEPH FULTON, O.P. St. Alberts College, 6172 Chabot Road, Oakland 18, Calif.

**PALOS VERDES** (Cal.) (No. 129).—Mrs. B. SHELBOURNE, 440 Via Corta, P.O. Box 863.

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**SIERRA MADRE** (Cal.) (No. 80).—Mrs. T. 274 W. Montecito Avenue.

**WORCESTER** (Mass.) (No. 119).—Mrs. T. LEE, Jr., 60 Beaconsfield Road.